JONAH GOLDBERG ON GORE'S PRESS | HIGH-TECH POLITICS | N.Y. TIMES TO NYPD: DROP DEAD!

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

$4.95

A National Magazine of Politics, Business, and Culture

HEROES TODAY

Where are they?

Answers from
Stephen Ambrose
James Webb
Joseph Epstein
Martin Morse Wooster
Harvey Mansfield
Jeff Jacoby
Ben Stein *and others*

Volume 11, Number 6

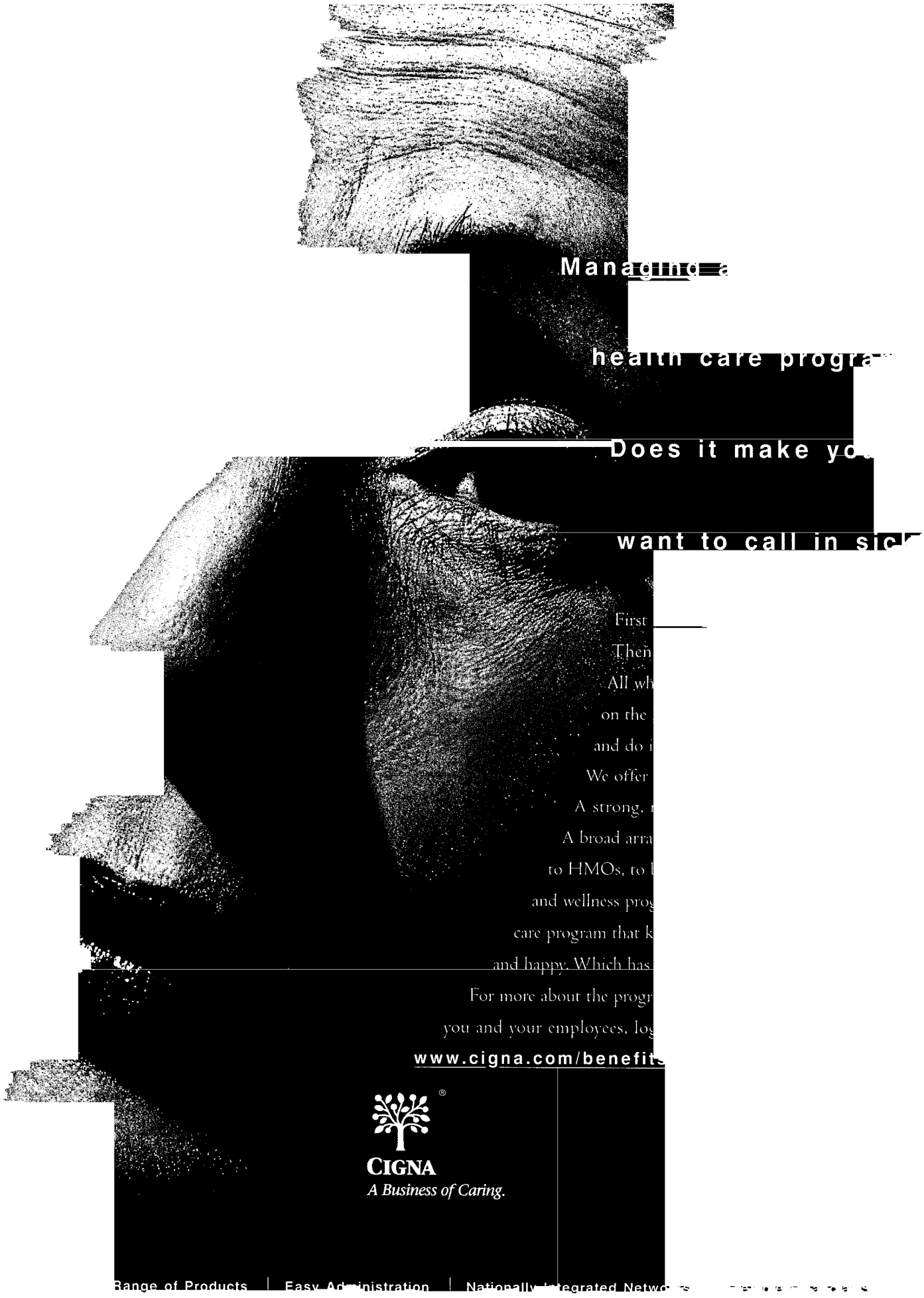
September 2000

Display until 9/18/00

09

73361 64829 7

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WEB W/O WIRES™

Subscription and service provider dependent. Ⓜ, Motorola. Timeport and Web W/O Wires are trademarks of Motorola, Inc. © 2000 Motorola, Inc. Yahoo! is a trademark of Yahoo, Inc. Phone.com and the "P-icon" are trademarks of Phone.com, Inc.

browser by phone.com™

MOTOROLA.com

TIMEPORT WEBPHONE MINI-BROWSING CAPABILITIES. E-MESSAGING, INFORMATION AND BANKING SERVICES. GET THE WEB W/O WIRES IN YOUR HANDS AT MOTOROLA.COM OR 1.800.331.6456.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

A NATIONAL MAGAZINE OF POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

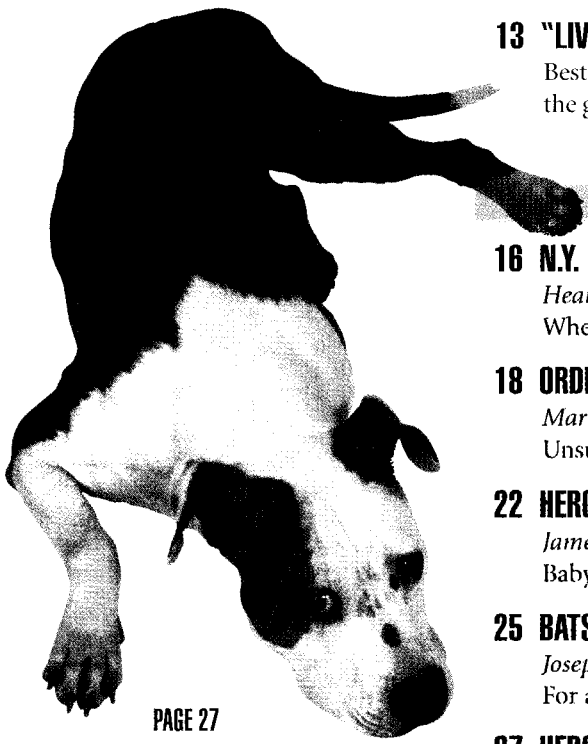
SEPTEMBER 2000 VOL. 11, NO. 6

4 BIRD'S EYE *Mary Elizabeth Podles*
Training for monsters.

7 SCAN **Short News and Commentary**
Ben Stein on the universal hero. Kid capitalism. Gun scapegoats. Governor Backstabber. Shane in the city. The Bible goes to school. An education agenda for the GOP. George Burns was right. An honorable patriot.

12 FORWARD OBSERVER *James Glassman*
Who's winning the high-tech vote—and who should be.

13 "LIVE" WITH *TAE*
Best-selling historian *Stephen Ambrose* talks about Eisenhower, D-Day, the great railroads, and what's wrong with history today.



PAGE 27

16 N.Y. PRESS TO NYPD: DROP DEAD!
Heather Mac Donald
When trashing the cops, hypocrisy helps.

18 ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY RESCUES
Martin Morse Wooster
Unsung heroes get their due.

22 HEROES OF THE VIETNAM GENERATION
James Webb
Baby boomers now praise WWII vets—yet still ignore their generation's war heroes.

25 BATS, BALLS, AND IDOLS
Joseph Epstein
For a boy searching for heroes, the world of sports was a good place to start.

27 HEROISM GOES TO THE DOGS
Diana Schaub
The most noble among us often walk on four legs.

29 STORIES THAT INSPIRE
Ellen Wilson Fielding
Don't settle for self-absorbed mediocrity for your children.

31 NOT-SO-SUPER HEROES
Evan Gahr
These days, you're more likely to find Superman on a psychiatrist's couch than in a phone booth.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

32 DOES RELIGION HINDER HEROISM?
Robert Royal
For martyrs, humility and compassion breed sacrifice not cowardice.

35 NO REVERENCE, NO HEROES
Edward Ericson
Don't look for the roots of heroism in a material world.

38 BE A MAN—TAKE RISKS, WIN MONEY AND HONOR
Harvey Mansfield
Manliness—and enterprise—aren't about playing it safe.

40 THE TEACHER AS HERO
John Rodden
Great teachers do more than just teach.

42 MY FATHER
Jeff Jacoby
He suffered, but he never complained.

44 LOSING GROUND
Peter Gibbon
Heroes haven't forsaken America; we've forsaken heroes.

PAGE 18

48 IN REAL LIFE ◇ **First-person America**
Detective *Ray Wisher* sees an innocent victimized again—this time by a lawyer.

49 FLASHBACK ◇ *Bill Kauffman*
A strong-willed woman who took on the IRS and the Sixteenth Amendment.

50 HOLLYWOOD REPORT ◇ *John Meroney*
In Hollywood, heroism is back in style.

51 BEAT THE PRESS ◇ *Jonah Goldberg*
The press has had some fun with Al Gore. But how long will it last?

52 THE DIGEST ◇ **Summaries of Important Research**
Does affirmative action cause crime?...losers in the war against Microsoft... *pro bono* lawyering is far from free...WHO wants your cigarettes.

56 BOOK TALK
- Leon Aron—*Ravelstein* by Saul Bellow
- Paul Cantor—*Shows About Nothing* by Thomas S. Hibbs
- Tracy Lee Simmons—*Memoirs of a Superfluous Man* by Albert Jay Nock

60 OPINION PULSE ◇ **The Latest Survey Data**
Social Security—time for a change? Vanishing heroes. How's work?

63 THE MAIL
Pros and cons of military academies. The future of cities. Don't bash Hillary.

64 LAST GASP

PAGE 7

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

A NATIONAL MAGAZINE OF POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

SEPTEMBER 2000 VOL. 11, NO. 6

PUBLISHER *CHRISTOPHER DEMUTH*
EDITOR IN CHIEF *KARL ZINSMEISTER*
SENIOR EDITOR *SCOTT WALTER*
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT *BRANDON BOSWORTH*
ASSOCIATE EDITORS *BILL KAUFFMAN*, *JOHN MERONEY*, *MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER*
OPINION PULSE EDITOR *KARLYN H. BOWMAN*
ART DIRECTOR *JO ROBACK-PAL*
GRAPHIC DESIGNER *JEANNE BERGER*
PROOFREADERS *GAYLE YIOTIS*, *DAVID BRANDT*
BUSINESS MANAGER *CHRISTINE REYERSON COYLE*
INTERNS *MEGAN GUPTA*, *DARREN MARKS*, *STEVEN MENASHI*, *EMILY REHRING*
CHIEF OF OPERATIONS *DAVID GERSON*

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
EDWARD ERICSON, EVAN GAHR, JAMES GLASSMAN
JONAH GOLDBERG, KEVIN HASSETT, BLAKE HURST
JOEL KOTKIN, PHILIP LANGDON, DANIEL LAPIN
JOSH LARSEN, ELI LEHRER, GEORGE LIEBMANN
RALPH REILAND, BEN STEIN, FREDERICK TURNER
RAY WISHER

POSTMASTER: Send all subscription correspondence and address changes to The American Enterprise, P.O. Box 7144, Bensenville, IL 60106-7144. THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE (ISSN 1047-3572), published eight times per year by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Copyright © 2000, the American Enterprise Institute. All rights reserved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
"The Mail," The American Enterprise,
1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036,
or fax (202) 862-5867, or e-mail
TheAmericanEnterprise@compuserve.com.

WEB PAGE
www.TheAmericanEnterprise.org

PRODUCTION AND BUSINESS OFFICE
The American Enterprise
1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
(202) 862-5886.

OFFICE OF THE EDITOR IN CHIEF
The American Enterprise
23 Hurd Street, Cazenovia, N.Y. 13035.
(315) 655-1033.

MANUSCRIPTS
The editors welcome article submissions.
We will not be responsible, though, for returning unsolicited manuscripts. Send to Senior Editor at Washington, D.C. address.

BACK ISSUES
Send $6 per copy to Production Office, above.

SUBSCRIPTIONS
New or Problems: (888) 295-9007. $28 one year.

Bird's Eye

MARY ELIZABETH PODLES

Training for Monsters

I am not a heroine. I did not grow up amid awful struggles, nor have I ever been a war correspondent. As a very occasional writer, I consider it a small form of heroism to face the yawning spaces of the empty page, but like those who grapple with the problem of being very rich, I don't expect any sympathy. I do not travel in the company of heroes, and in fact spend most of my time in the company of my children.

Still, and probably therefore, I have an interest in heroes. Like the other writers in this issue, I have had to examine the hard questions: Who are our heroes? What makes a hero? Who needs them anyhow?

Everyone, apparently. As soon as any culture becomes sufficiently self-conscious to want its own literature, it tells us the story of its heroes. For the story of the hero's life answers the fundamental question we all ask: How then shall we live?

Surely we are not all called to be heroes? And yet, the pattern of the hero's life is the pattern of every man's life. But why does it need to be on such a grand scale, this story of our own life?

It seems to be built into us, for some reason, that to learn something in small we have to see it really, really big. Maybe we are a little slow on the uptake. Butterflies, not noted for their cranial capacity, demonstrate the phenomenon in their way. According to the essayist Annie Dillard, entomological experiments have demonstrated that a male butterfly will ignore any number of interested females and determinedly woo a painted cardboard butterfly, provided it is big, bigger even than humanly (or rather, insectly) possible.

How then, Dillard asks plaintively, can the mere writer of words hope to compete with the sensory stimulation of the movies, with a nine-foot hero, or the dazzling three-foot smile of a Julia Roberts? Walker Percy spends much of his novel *The Moviegoer* examining this principle: Our lives are amorphous, without clear meaning, and one way to validate our experience, to certify it, as it were, is to see it, the place where we live or the things we do ourselves, writ large on the silver screen.

We need to see our own characteristics and aspirations magnified, really big, bigger than life, in order to absorb them into the pitiful little wrinkles of our cerebellums.

Children know this. Try to teach them the virtues with a preachy little morality tale, and I guarantee you the gagging face and the finger-across-the-throat gesture. As the neighborhood homeschooler, I find myself on the receiving end of a great many complaints about Baltimore's expensive schools both public and private: Somehow, having nothing at stake makes me fair game for the grievance committee. One little boy was subjected to a modern, politically correct version of the awful Victorian goody-goody tale of our grandfathers' youth: In each of a series of "literature" texts he was given the story of some poor, downtrodden inhabitant of the Third World, who eked out an existence at the hands of overbearing capitalists—but she survived.

Naturally the boy found these stories ridiculous and loathsome. A sensible child, he had devised a special ritual of mockery with his father, and when a new story in the series began, they would converse as follows:

"Guess who I am this week?"

"I don't know; are you white?"

"No!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Are you male?"
"No!"
"Do you live in the USA?"
"No!"
"Who are you then?"
"I'm a Bolivian Indian girl who has to roll cigarettes for an evil tobacco company!"

IT SEEMS TO BE BUILT INTO US THAT TO LEARN SOMETHING IN SMALL, WE HAVE TO SEE IT REALLY, REALLY BIG.

But another child of the same age had discovered *Beowulf* on her own, long before Seamus Heaney's translation made it a popular book to buy. She knew nothing about what it was, and kind of hoped it might be one of a series too. She said, "I read this really great book? Called Beowulf? Or maybe it was one of the Beowulf books. Anyway he tears the arm off this monster? That was gross—but it was really cool. He was cool."

Of course he was cool. He is a hero. But what, after all, is a hero but one of us, only bigger? He has turned his youthful and dangerous aggressions to good use for the protection of others, conquered his physical and psychological fears, faced danger and the ultimate reality of death, taken great risks with the possibility of great reward; in short, has established his identity as a leader and protector of his community. Just as each of us has to do, only more so.

Beowulf's story is our story, only his has monsters. Our ordinary lives really do have a form off the big screen: We are in training for monsters, hoping that we also could come through in extraordinary circumstances, in the event of the big exam that may never come.

The convenience and complexity of the modern world may have robbed us of some of our monsters, and therefore of our initiations and flying-up exercises. There is in Nepal a special social set among the Sherpas; they live by a stricter code of behavior than their neighbors and are accorded the privilege of adding the initials K.C. to their names, for Khatri Chhetri, or warrior caste. Now, the Sherpas have by and large abandoned warring on their neighbors for the more lucrative pursuit of lugging oxygen and supplies up Everest for adventuresome Westerners.

This leaves the warriors at somewhat loose ends. Therefore, when the survivors of the famous ill-fated 1996 expedition needed a dangerous airlift, a message came through from a K.C. at the Embassy in Katmandu: "I know a man who thinks he has a brave heart, but he's never been sufficiently challenged to know if this is true." In fact, Madan K.C. leapt at the chance. He flew a helicopter through the impossibly thin air and punishing winds not once but twice to rescue the injured climbers. Sometimes you have to go looking for your monsters.

BIRD'S EYE guest author Mary Elizabeth Podles raises her six heroes in training in Baltimore, Maryland.

Karl Zinsmeister will return in our next issue.

This issue of *The American Enterprise* was edited by Scott Walter.

Of course we too have our monsters, only they are our vices, which we can conquer only by flexing and exercising such virtues as we have. Virtue is not in good repute in this topsy-turvy world. Mention the word in mixed company and watch everyone squirm with embarrassment. Yet each of the writers in this issue who has set to grappling with the philosophical question *What is a hero?* ends up simply listing the virtues a hero needs: Joseph Epstein gives us the honorable sportsman, Harvey Mansfield the manly man, Diana Schaub the dogly dog.

Ellen Wilson Fielding, picking through the fictional heroes that appealed to her children, puts her finger on why we need heroes at all: to raise up our young in the way that they should act, to teach them the virtues in some way that they can learn.

"All virtue is a form of acting," the poet Yeats tells us—but acting is a craft and must be learned through practice. In the recent movie *Galaxy Quest*, a band of has-been actors from a science fiction series find themselves whisked off into space by a literal-minded race of creatures who are threatened by monsters and need heroic rescuers. They have mistaken the lame TV episodes for historical documentaries and expect deeds of heroism from the ordinary schmoes they have abducted. At first it is ludicrous. But the actors find that they can be heroes: They just do what they were trained to do on the TV set, only this time the hazards are for real. And they come through.

This may be the way it works in real life. Paradoxically, heroes don't seem to recognize themselves for what they are. They come through without really thinking about it. Their virtues are so internalized that they do not recognize them as heroic. Numerous writers for this issue were startled by this diffidence: James Webb's Marines only regret that they couldn't do more. Some of the Carnegie Hero Fund rescuers declined to be interviewed. Robert Royal's modern martyrs were profoundly humble men. Jeff Jacoby's father never bragged and never complained, never set himself apart from others. The list goes on of those who shun recognition.

Yet fame and glory are the rewards we give willy-nilly to those who are willing to face fear and premature destruction. Recently I caught a glimmer of the ancient *kleos*, the recognition we give to the hero, in small. I went to collect my boys at the airport; they were returning from two weeks in the back country with the Scouts. As the troop came off the plane, they stood out in marked contrast to the flabby vacationers—lean, bronzed, fit, hanging together like comrades returned from the battlefield, there was something transcendent about them.

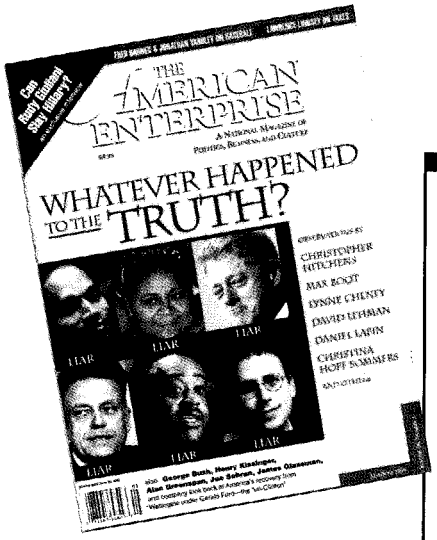
They turned a lot of heads. I was proud of them. I knew what a lot of them had overcome to do the trek and come through as a unit (teenage boys can be awful jerks, make no mistake). One young mother made sure to point them out to her own little boy. "Look," she said, "those are the Scouts who hiked 180 miles in the wilderness." He was impressed. In his eyes, they were really, really big.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pick A Free Issue

Subscribe or renew NOW

& choose a FREE issue from our collection of greatest hits!



Start a one-year subscription to *The American Enterprise,* or extend your existing subscription (in either case at our standard one-year price of $28), and **we'll send you a classic back issue at no extra charge** (a $6 value).

We'll even let you **choose** the issue you want.

Fill in your subscriber's information. Then mark the free back issue you'd like, and we'll send it at the same time we process your subscription order.

Copy or tear out and mail to
The American Enterprise
1150 17th Street, NW,
Washington, DC 20036

or FAX to 202.862.5867

- ☐ **Where is Hillary Going?** Peggy Noonan, Christopher Hitchens, David Horowitz, Eleanor Clift, John Fund, David Brock, Christina Hoff Sommers, Joyce Milton, Laura Ingraham, and others debate her past and future. Also: Best Business Schools. (J/A '00)
- ☐ **The War on Boys** by Christina Hoff Sommers. Also: Ward Connerly recounts his struggles with racial identity; Bob Costas speaks out; will compassionate conservatism work? (June '00)
- ☐ **Winning Election 2000** Michael Barone, Newt Gingrich, David Horowitz, Christopher Hitchens, John Fund, & many others take an in-depth look at the persons & ideas that matter. (A/M '00)
- ☐ **Who's to Thank for the Long Economic Boom?** Answers from James Glassman, Alan Reynolds, Stephen Moore, Kevin Hassett, & more. Also: a gay man decries 'gay rights'. (March '00)
- ☐ **The Mistake of the Century** The mania for centralized control is critiqued by Robert Conquest, Tom Bethell, & Joel Kotkin. We cross-examine Ken Starr. (J/F '00)
- ☐ **Famous Figures Judge the 1990s** Robert Bork, Andrew Ferguson, David Horowitz, Michael Novak & others imagine what history's greatest figures would think of our age. (N/D '99)
- ☐ **Does Father Still Know Best?** Reflections on fatherhood from Ben Stein, Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Karl Zinsmeister & others. Also: Blacks, moms, and cops against gun control. (S/O '99)
- ☐ **Deep Inside America's Military Academies** James Webb, Pat Conroy, Bill Kauffman & others in a special report based on 12 month of in-depth investigation. Also: Chris Matthews, live. (J/A '99)
- ☐ **Whatever Happened to the Truth?** Answers from Christopher Hitchens, Christina Hoff Sommers, Lynne Cheney, & others. (M/J '99)
- ☐ **How to Clean Up Trash TV** Answers from Michael Medved, David Horowitz, Joseph Lieberman, Steve Allen, & more. (M/A '99)
- ☐ **Is America Turning a Corner?** Startling new data on recent improvements in social trends. Plus: Lucianne Goldberg, Andrew Ferguson, & Mark Steyn look back at the Year of the Goat. (J/F '99)
- ☐ **Race** Exploding cliches on America's touchiest subject with Reggie & Sara White, J.C. Watts, Ward Connerly, & others. (N/D '98)
- ☐ **Does Science Have All the Answers?** George Gilder, Charles Murray, Jerry Pournelle etc. tackle space, evolution, God. (S/O '98)
- ☐ **Will China Bury Us?** Conflicting answers to this crucial question by P.J. O'Rourke, Pat Buchanan, Steven Mosher, & many more. Also: How guns can stop mass shootings.(J/A '98)
- ☐ **Boom Towns** Nashville illustrates why the Great American Heartland is booming. Also: Why the media don't understand America. (M/A '98)
- ☐ **Gen X** The good, bad, & ugly sides of today's youth. And: Clint Eastwood talks politics. P.J. O'Rourke. Welfare reform. (J/F '98)
- ☐ **Shrinking Government** It's not a lost cause, say Steve Forbes, James Buchanan, & others. Also: Bennett vs Bork on alcohol. (N/D '97)
- ☐ **The '60s Return** James Webb, P.J. O'Rourke, Robert Bork, Fred Barnes, David Horowitz, Bill Bennett, etc. on the decade that opened the liberal floodgates. (M/J '97)
- ☐ **TV—Friend or Foe?** Ben Stein, Don Feder, Michael Medved, Mona Charen, Rupert Murdoch. Plus: Alan Greenspan—cultist? (S/O '97)
- ☐ **Tradition: Who Needs It?** Exploring the value of time-tested ideas. James Webb, Stanley Crouch, Wynton Marsalis, Michael Medved, E.D. Hirsch, Miss Manners, Mark Steyn, Charles Murray. (M/A '97)
- ☐ **Privatizing Social Security** Meet the super-reform that would rev up the national economy, and dramatically shrink government. (J/F '97)
- ☐ **Who Are America's Religious Conservatives?** A surprising look, with James Dobson, Fred Barnes, Marvin Olasky, Glenn Loury. (N/D '95)

☐ Please start my one-year subscription to *The American Enterprise.*
(AFAS00)

☐ Please extend my current subscription by one year.
(EFAS00)

Name .....

Address .....

.....

City .....

State/Zip .....

☐ check for $28 (made out to *The American Enterprise*) enclosed.
☐ bill my VISA/MC/AMEX

card # .....

expires .....

sig. .....

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

LICENSED TO UMI/ProQuest
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SCAN

VIDEO VINDICATION

Sometimes our perspective on law enforcement gets turned around, and everyone stopped by the police seems to be a victim. The New Jersey State Police found that out two years ago, when a much-ballyhooed shooting launched a national crusade against "racial profiling." Now the troopers may have found a way to perch the public back on the shoulder of justice: by videotaping every traffic stop they make.

So far the cameras are working well. As of May, the troopers had received 40 complaints involving taped traffic stops. In every case the tapes showed the troopers acting properly. Thirty-eight of the complaints were resolved simply by rolling the video; the remaining two cases resulted in felony indictments—of the *accusers*, not the police. In one case, Thomas Golden was indicted for "falsely incriminating another." Golden claimed to be the victim of reverse racial profiling when, he said, Sergeant L. Gregan threatened him, used racial slurs, and pinned his hand against the car door with a holstered pistol. The tape shows this never happened; so Golden now faces up to 18 months in jail and a $10,000 fine, if convicted.

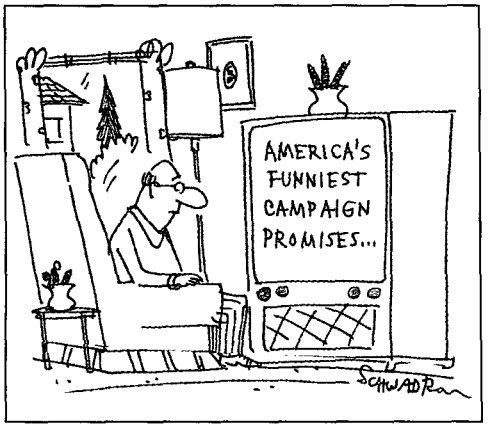
The state police had wanted cameras in the cars for years, but at $3,500 a pop, equipping all 961 patrol cars was too expensive. Now, in the wake of the racial profiling controversy, 745 patrol cars have cameras. The remaining cars are old and will be fitted with the new equipment when upgraded.

The cameras are mounted on the dash and each trooper wears a microphone; all conversations and actions are recorded. The officers have no access to the tapes, which are locked in a metal box in the trunk. Periodically, the tapes are removed and stored. They are treated like crime scene evidence, so the troopers can rely on them in court.

For the state police, being exonerated in every incident is good news, and they hope it will repair their reputation. Since breaking the racial-profiling story in April 1998, the *New Jersey Star-Ledger* has published more than 200 stories on race profiling. The national media stepped up the pressure when it picked up the story, leading to the forced resignation of State Police Superintendent Carl Williams and new penalties for officers who use racial profiling of motorists to screen for likely lawbreakers.

Critics argue the troopers are behaving well only because they are on tape. But whatever the reason, this hard evidence shows that police work is difficult, that the vast majority of cops act professionally, and that few of those stopped by the police are victims.

—**Brendan Miniter** *is an editor for the Commentary section of the* Washington Times.



SHANE IN THE CITY

Alan Ladd was such a small man that he regularly stood on a box while filming the classic 1953 film *Shane*, but when he looks Jack Palance in the eye and doesn't twitch, Ladd is the perfect cross between James Dean and Harrison Ford.

The best part of the movie is the relationship between Shane and little Joey Starrett. After learning life's lessons at the foot of the master, I always imagined a grown Joey becoming a heck of a sheriff.

Today's inner-city youths are not far away in spirit from the Starretts' Grand Teton home. It would take a Shane to stand up to the Crips and the Bloods. But if Shane could be sent in, would it make a difference?

One of my favorite econometric papers sheds light on that important question. In "The Company You Keep: The Effects of Family and Neighborhood on Disadvantaged Youths," Anne C. Case and Lawrence F. Katz sift through data on Boston inner-city youth in the late 1980s. They demonstrate that the two things that matter most to a kid are (1) his family and (2) the kids in his neighborhood.

Case and Katz use a large dataset to examine six behaviors: crime, drug use, becoming a single parent, being idle, dropping out of high school, and attending church. The data show that kids tend to be a lot like their parents. If a family member is in jail, a child is much more likely to commit a crime. If a family

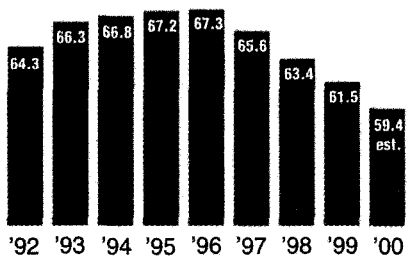
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOT-SO-DANGEROUS DEBT

With massive budget surpluses in Washington, some pols insist that a hefty portion of that money—your money—must be used to pay down the national debt. Yet without any help from those surplus funds, the debt has actually been shrinking in size compared to the economy (see chart).

Which suggests that if the economy continues to grow, the debt could easily be kept in control. And of course, one fine way to fuel an economy is to let productive Americans keep the rewards of their labor.

Federal Debt as % of GDP



Source: U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

member has a drug or alcolhol problem, a child is much more likely to. If your mother was less than 20 when she had you, or your parents are not married, you are much more likely to have a child out of wedlock yourself.

Interestingly, the effects do not cross-fertilize much. If you have a family member in jail, it doesn't affect your probability of being a single parent. If your parents finished school, then you are much more likely to do so yourself, but that doesn't change your likelihood of committing a crime, doing drugs, or being a single parent. About the only factor that does affect unrelated behaviors is attending church: Kids of parents who attend church are much less likely to use illegal drugs.

The kids in your neighborhood are also important. Increase the number of children in your neighborhood who have committed a crime by 50 percent, and the odds of your kid's committing a crime increase about 5 percent. Increase the number of kids in your neighborhood who do drugs by 50 percent, and the odds of your child's doing drugs increase about 19 percent. There are good influences too. Increase the number of children in your neighborhood who go to church by 50 percent, and the odds of your child's going increase about 25 percent.

Case and Katz lack the data to determine the effect of adults on other people's children, but their evidence is highly suggestive. Since parents have a large effect on their own children, and children have a large effect on each other, there clearly must be a link. If we could talk Shane into raising a family in the South Bronx, we could surely change some lives. The problem is, the linkage goes both ways: Shane's kids could end up gang members; so the good role models in the Bronx are behaving rationally if they head for the 'burbs.

Still, we should search for ways to stave off the flight of role models and encourage the immigration of new role models into bad areas. Many localities are already catching on. Washington, D.C., for example, gives first-time home buyers there a $5,000 tax credit. That's a good incentive for Shane to come back

—*Contributing writer* **Kevin Hassett** *is an* American Enterprise Institute *resident scholar.*

THE BIBLE IS NO LAUGHING MATTER

"In Australia, we have a rather unkind joke," an acquaintance reported. "We say that in America, the kids are allowed to take their guns to school but not their Bibles."

This grim quip on school violence usually gets laughs with foreigners. Yet I wonder whether U.S. schools' treatment of religion will long continue be a source of international humor. For while skirmishes over school prayer and posting the Ten Commandments have received much attention, a significant development has gone largely unnoticed.

The Freedom Forum (an educational foundation dedicated to promoting First Amendment freedoms) recently issued a report, "The Bible and Public Schools," which encourages educators to teach students about the influence of biblical stories and concepts in subjects like literature, history, music, art, and social studies.

An amazingly diverse coalition has endorsed the report, including the National Education Association, the National Bible Association, the American Jewish Congress, the National Association of Evangelicals, the American Federation of Teachers, the Christian Educators Association, and People for the American Way.

The Freedom Forum is *not* calling for public schools to engage in religious indoctrination. Indeed, its report carefully states that any teacher-led study of religion must be educational, not devotional, since formation in faith is the responsibility of parents and religious communities, not public schools. But the report also makes clear that a certain amount of biblical literacy is necessary for Americans to understand the role religion has played and continues to play in Western civilization. As Supreme Court Justice and civil libertarian William Brennan once observed, "It would be impossible to teach meaningfully many subjects in the social sciences or the humanities without some mention of religion."

Authors Charles Haynes and Chuck Stetson explain that teaching students about the Bible is one way public educators can cultivate respect for the role religion plays in public life, without promoting a particular sect or group. And integrating the Bible in the curriculum complements character education programs that seek to teach students morality in a manner that neither invokes nor discredits religious authority.

In addition, teaching about the Bible helps students understand why so many Americans responded when Abraham Lincoln quoted Matthew 12:25, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." And it gives them a better understanding of everyday language, including "by the skin of my teeth" (Job 19:20), a "fly in the ointment" (Ecclesiastes 10:1), a "drop in the bucket" (Isaiah 40:15), "see eye to eye" (Isaiah 52:8), the "eleventh hour" (Matthew 20:6), the "kiss of death" (Matthew 26:49), "washed his hands of it" (Matthew 27:29), and the "grapes of wrath" (Revelation 17:4).

The Freedom Forum recognizes that teaching public high school students about the Bible carries with it as many risks as teaching drivers' ed, shop, or chemistry. But the Forum also insists that ignoring the Bible in the classroom is an even riskier proposition. As that Australian acquaintance told me, schools that ignore the Bible are something of a joke.

—**William R. Mattox Jr.** *is a member of* USA Today*'s Board of Contributors.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AN HONORABLE PATRIOT

The Patriot, an honestly brutal film set during the American Revolution, has a virtue beyond its fervent love of country: Above all, this big summer movie honors military sacrifice without resorting to Hollywood's usual glorification of violence.

The Patriot is violent, to be sure, but not since *Saving Private Ryan* has a film painted such a balanced picture of bloodshed's necessity and cost. Because Robert Rodat wrote the screenplays for both historical epics, one is tempted to credit him. Yet other hands were involved here, notably those of star Mel Gibson, whose family-oriented, Catholic background makes him somewhat of a Hollywood oddball, and director Roland Emmerich, the German filmmaker who ironically brought a flag-waving enthusiasm to the alien-invasion hit *Independence Day*.

Yet unlike *Independence Day*, *The Patriot* isn't just a communal massage of the American ego. This is a movie full of flawed and desperate characters, some of whom make flawed decisions in the most desperate of times. Gibson's Benjamin Martin, a pacific farmer who forms a militia against the British to avenge an attack on his family, is a veteran of the French and Indian War. One question haunting the movie is whether he committed atrocities during a similar mission of vengeance in that conflict. This is an American hero capable of great rage and violence, and *The Patriot* is at its best when contemplating whether or not that violence is just.

Such questions arise during the first action set piece, in which Martin leads two of his young boys on an ambush of a British unit holding his oldest son hostage. As Martin gruesomely chops his way through the British soldiers with his Cherokee axe, his children watch in stunned horror; they see their father less as some sort of Schwarzenegger action hero and more as a crazed killer. When Martin looks up at his sons after bludgeoning his last victim, his face is both victorious and riddled with shame.

There's also a stunning fight sequence in which another character defeats a sadistic British colonel. But rather than take his foe prisoner, this patriot seeks revenge by attempting the same sort of mutilation that Martin has been accused of committing during the French and Indian War. The would-be avenger, however, receives an ugly reward.

When a similar situation arises during the movie's climactic battle, *The Patriot* has an opportunity to make a truly staggering statement about sacrificing personal vengeance—and even yourself—for the greater good. Alas, this being a Hollywood blockbuster, Martin ultimately gets to take down the bad guy and still live to enjoy the glory.

That crowd-pleasing finale keeps the film from greatness, but at least it's smartly sobered by all that has come before. Just as the graphic nature of *Saving Private Ryan* made World War II real by giving it a life beyond monuments and days off school, so too does *The Patriot* lift the sacrifices made during the Revolutionary War out of our dusty textbooks. That these sacrifices were made by men who struggled with the repercussions of violence makes this a summer movie with surprising resonance.

—**Josh Larsen** *is a contributing writer to* TAE.

SCAPEGOATS

A while back, TV screens filled with live coverage of a botched bank robbery that was unusually violent even for Los Angeles. Two masked men shot it out with police until, hours later, both criminals lay dead, with 11 officers and at least five bystanders injured.

The blood had not yet been washed from the sidewalks when commentary began. A state senator called for closing loopholes in weapons laws. The chair of the public safety committee of the Los Angeles City Council called for stricter gun-control laws. A law professor blamed the gun lobby.

The criminals used automatic weapons (which fire repeatedly with just one pull of the trigger)—weapons that have been virtually banned by federal law since 1934, with mere possession good for ten years in prison. Clearly the crooks got their weapons on the illegal market, where most criminals get their guns. Perhaps the guns arrived from our "strategic partner" China, a major source of such weapons; perhaps they came across the Mexican border; perhaps they were imported by the arms dealer who visited the White House and made large contributions to the Democratic Party. Those who blamed lax gun laws never raised these possibilities.

Placing blame where it doesn't belong means not having to discover where it does belong, which might be embarrassing. It is easier to blame the gun lobby, which we are led to believe represents gun manufacturers and is composed of militia types running around in camouflage fatigues and hatching nefarious plots. Instead of trying to solve complex problems like what to do about a revolving-

MISERY SELLS

What's easier to sell: misery or money? The answer, for the military, turns out to be misery.

Of the four services, only the Marines have no trouble making their recruiting goals, and they do so while spending far less on ads, according to a new Defense Department report. While the other services try to lure the young with cash for college—up to $50,000—the Corps offers nothing but hard challenges: "Running Won't Kill You," a magazine ad taunts, "You'll Pass Out First."

The Defense report concludes that patriotism, discipline, and pride appeal far more to kids than money. We hope parents as well as recruiters are listening.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

door justice system, violent gangs, or fatherless boys, it's easier to respond to violent crimes by reflexively repeating, "We need more gun-control laws, and it's the gun lobby's fault we don't have them."

Such mindless repetition could be performed by parrots—which are cheaper to maintain and prettier to look at than politicians and pundits.

—**David Stolinsky** *practices medicine in Los Angeles.*

THE BACKSTABBER

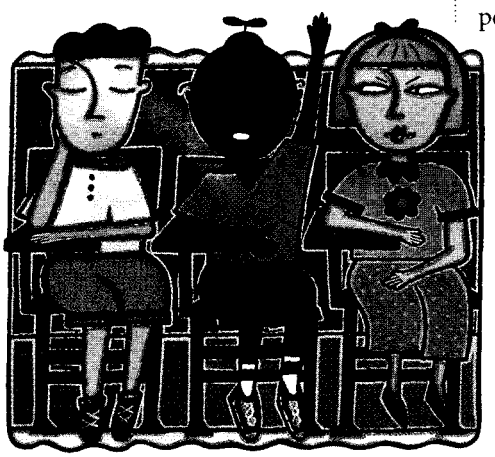
New York Governor George Pataki, you must remember, got his start in statewide politics by stabbing a former friend in the back. In 1992 he defeated State Senator Mary Goodhue, for whom he had once worked, in a bitter primary. Two years later, Pataki vanquished Governor Mario Cuomo, largely due to an overwhelming anti-Cuomo turnout in rural upstate New York. A significant part of the anti-Cuomo animus owed to the governor's oft-expressed contempt for gun owners.

Rural New Yorkers now know the same hard truth about George Pataki that Senator Goodhue learned. Governor Pataki has pushed through the state legislature a set of new gun controls that are among the harshest in the nation. "It really puts New York in the forefront among the states," sighed Barbara Hohlt of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence. Among other focus-group-tested provisions, the Pataki package raises the age for gun permits from 18 to 21, requires trigger locks on new handguns, and requires background checks at gun shows.

The volunteer fire departments and sportsmen's groups that sponsor gun shows—which are essentially rural swap meets (see "The Shocking Truth About Gun Shows," September/October 1999)—may be devastated by the new gun-show regulations, which discourage the sort of unlicensed buying, selling, and trading that is part of the folksy charm of the gun show.

The New York Times is pleased; the people to whom Pataki owes his 1994 elevation from obscurity are not. The governor is up for re-election in 2002. He may find, as his Hudson Valley brother Benedict Arnold did all those years ago, that sometimes turncoats get punished.

—*Associate editor* **Bill Kauffman** *lives in his native Genesee County, New York, and is the author of* Country Towns of New York.



OPEN UP THE SCHOOLS

The Republican Party has a problem with education. Polls show education is the public's highest concern, yet Republicans believe schools are best kept under local control. So the Republicans' national education proposals strike voters as negative or trivial.

The current party agenda consists of small-bore proposals for federally assisted merit pay for teachers; private school vouchers (at least for students in failing schools); and consolidating existing federal grant programs. None of these policies has much of a constituency. Worse, they nibble around the central problem: The public schools are a closed shop. Their teachers are restricted to education school graduates, whose unions are the most powerful American lobby and whose philosophy favors uniformity and "leveling down."

A Republican program for education should have one central objective: demolishing the closed shop. Here are a few particular suggestions, each of which has a constituency.

• All federal aid that comes with mandates should go to districts—not state departments of education—with the greatest need. Districts surrendering funds can be compensated by being relieved of onerous mandates.

• Launch a high-profile crusade to repeal federal restrictions on school discipline, as Senator Slade Gorton (R-Wash.) has urged. This will have the support of unionized teachers, if not of their unions.

• "Special education" programs are a major drain on inner-city systems, where "special" students now make up to 20-25 percent of the school population. If federal aid to special education is continued, as some Republicans propose, it should be restricted to students with true learning disabilities and the most seriously disruptive students, and it should be given directly to parents as vouchers. Unions have already accepted state and local programs that transfer the most difficult students to state-aided private schools, frequently at costs exceeding $40,000 per student. This is where vouchers should begin.

• Any general federal aid that is given should go directly to each school and be administered by the principal, subject to correction by a board for each school composed of parents, teachers, and community leaders, and subject to independent financial audit. That's how Britain wrested schools from union control: Elaborate grievance procedures that make it hard to remove unfit teachers disappear when each school makes its own hiring decisions.

• Passing a federal law that allows teachers certified in one state to teach in all states (subject to any local tests imposed on all teachers) would let states require teacher competence but demolish ed-school monopolies: Non-education majors could become certified in states that do not require ed school credentials, then teach elsewhere.

• Break up the single-salary schedule for teachers using a program that resembles the Eisenhower-era National Defense Education Act, which provided bonuses to qualified secondary-school science and math teachers.

A convincing Republican program needs several initiatives like these, put not in unread platform planks or occasional speeches, but in a formal document, endorsed by the congressional leadership and presented as the Con-

KID CAPITALISM

How young are the new high-tech moguls? asks P.J. O'Rourke: "There's a sign on the door at most New York investment banks: No Shirt, No Shoes, No IPO."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GEORGE BURNS WAS RIGHT

Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services, celebrated the thirty-fifth anniversary of Medicare at a gala featuring 102-year-old recipient Mark Powell—who told the *Washington Post* he smokes five or six cigars a day.

tract with America was—on the front steps of the Capitol, by a unified congressional delegation, joined by leading Republican governors.

A party without a serious education program, and a convincing determination to implement it, will not deserve to win an election.

—*Attorney* **George Liebmann** *is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

THE RACE OF HEROES

The world is populated by heroes. Every man or woman who lives a full life has to be a hero at some time. If you're middle aged, you have to face the death of your parents. If you're a mother, you have to go through the pain of childbirth. If you're in the military, you have to do dangerous acts, even in peacetime, and far more so in war.

If you get old, or even if you don't, you have to die. Almost always, the circumstances are painful, frequently lonely and frightening. I spent six weeks visiting an intensive care ward last year, surrounded by men, women, and children whose prognosis was dismal, who were in horrible discomfort, and who were often alone.

Though some may say they had no choice, they were still heroic in that they rarely cried out in pain or fear or loneliness. They gritted their teeth and bore their plight. To be a human is to face terrible problems, at least at the end, and this makes almost everyone a hero eventually. Indeed, everyone who is aware knows he must die and has no certainty of what comes afterwards. To carry on, to make families, to try to help others, to create great science and art in the face of certain death—that's heroism. The whole human race is the premier race of heroes, since we are the only species who know we are going to die.

For me, some heroes rank high: Men at war who throw themselves into desperate situations to save their comrades. I think of men who hurl themselves on top of grenades to save their squad; men who held on at Korea's Chosin Reservoir to cover a retreat; men who fought in the Pacific against hopeless odds until reinforcements could be brought up.

I often think of the men who—by the millions—went over the top in World War I to face certain death by machine gun fire on the Western front, and the men of the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia who threw themselves into Confederate trenches at Fredericksburg or Union fortifications at Malvern Hill, facing a horrible slow death if hit.

I think of my fellow Jews who were rounded up and had to face death, torture, humiliation, and pain, often working for long periods in illness and starvation, fighting to stay alive so they could see their children again. Then I think of those who fought back with guns in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and a hundred smaller actions with hopeless odds. These are the precursors of the Israeli fighting heroes, who laid down their lives so a state could be found for the wretched of the earth and then the state protected.

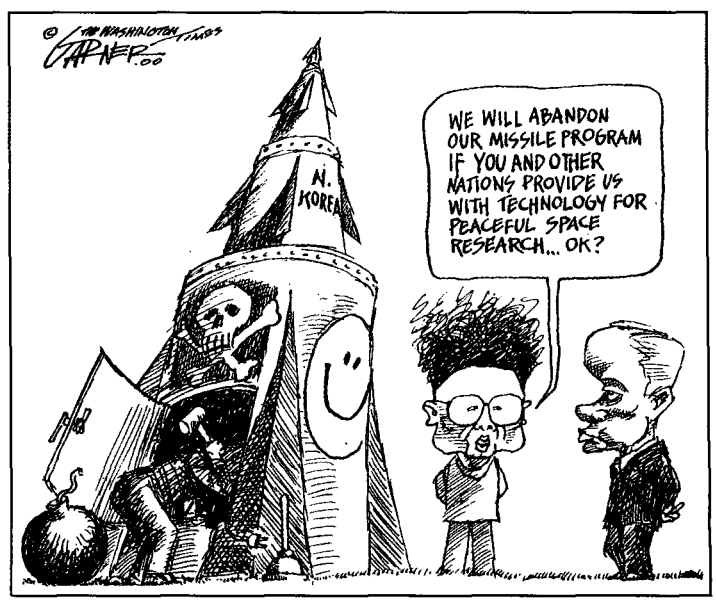
I often think with confusion about the bravery of the German and Soviet fighters in World War II. Despite being led by evil dictators, they displayed staggering courage in desperate situations. There were German units fighting with élan and ingenuity against the Russians until the last few moments of the war. You can hate what these people were fighting for, and even hate them, but their courage is undeniable. Still, to me, a hero has to be fighting for something at least somewhat decent. The German fighters were brave beyond words, but were they heroes? Not to me.

I've been privileged to know a number of heroes. My father-in-law, Colonel Dale Denman Jr., won two Silver Stars, one in Germany in World War II and one in Vietnam when he was middle aged, fighting against the North Vietnamese in brutal circumstances. My wife's uncle Bob Denman won the Silver Star for his heroism in Korea fighting off a Chinese advance. My law school classmate John Keker was a brave Marine gravely wounded in Vietnam. My financier pal Larry Lissitzyn also fought and was wounded in Vietnam. Both could easily have deferred military service. My high school classmate Tommy Norris won the Medal of Honor in Vietnam for going behind North Vietnamese borders to rescue downed U.S. fliers, even fighting and swimming with a bullet in his face. He is a hero beyond words.

And I think of a hero at home: my father, Herbert Stein. He was in combat against mortality for his last six brutal weeks, with every kind of pain and bodily breakdown, in imminent fear of death. Yet he kept his kindness and generosity of spirit to the end. The last thing he did before his heart stopped was to kiss the hand of a woman he loved who had come to visit him—with so many tubes in his mouth he could not even get the hand close.

But there are many others. Our race has deep flaws, but it is a race of heroes.

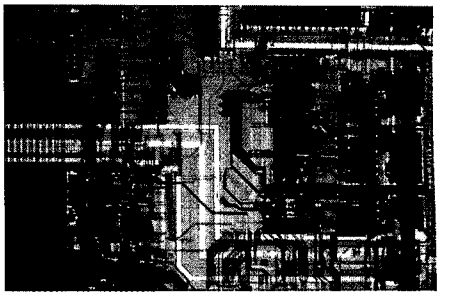
—*Contributing writer* **Ben Stein** *is an actor, lawyer, and author in Los Angeles.*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Forward Observer

JAMES GLASSMAN



High-tech Politics

As the "inventor" of the Internet, Vice President Al Gore would seem to deserve the broad support of Silicon Valley. Actually, of course, Gore didn't invent the Internet and shouldn't have the support of Silicon Valley if he had. Yet he does.

Kim Polese, CEO of Marimba, Inc., was quoted in the *Washington Post* recently as saying, "It's not a Republican valley or a Democratic valley." But that's nonsense. While there are no surveys providing empirical evidence, anyone who has traveled to Silicon Valley and other tech hot spots around the country cannot doubt that Democrats rule and that Gore is ahead in the presidential election.

In a Field poll taken in mid-June, Gore led Bush 46 percent to 35 percent in California overall, with 7 percent for Ralph Nader, the Green Party candidate. But in the San Francisco Bay area, ground zero for high technology, Gore led 58 percent to 23 percent, with 8 percent for Nader.

Here are the reasons why Gore shouldn't be leading: First, on issues of substance to techies, the Clinton administration has been, at best, an unenthusiastic supporter. Take, for example, what at mid-year was probably the single most important issue for Internet companies: increasing the number of H1-B visas the U.S. will issue to skilled workers from other countries (many from India) who fill the gaping ranks of high-tech firms. Finding good scientists is the biggest problem many of these companies face. After all, the number of computer and information sciences degrees granted in the United States in 1999 was actually below the figure nine years earlier.

So we have to import talent. There's nothing wrong with that. But unions—stalwart supporters of Democrats—object, since as they see it, more supply reduces (or at least deters the rapid rise of) the price of homegrown labor. And so the Clinton administration, including Gore, has been unenthusiastic about H1-B visas, according to Representative David Dreier (R-Calif.), the chief sponsor.

GORE DIDN'T INVENT THE INTERNET AND SHOULDN'T HAVE THE SUPPORT OF SILICON VALLEY IF HE HAD. YET HE DOES.

Another issue on which Democrats have been lukewarm—and indeed, openly hostile—is extending the moratorium on new taxes on the Internet, including sales taxes on purchases across state borders. In addition, the Democrats, looking out for their wealthy trial-lawyer friends, opposed sensible waivers of liability for Y2K glitches in software and hardware, which would have helped tech companies fend off frivolous lawsuits.

But far more important than specific issues is a party's overall outlook on government intervention in technology: The Democrats, including the Clinton administration, like it. Many tech firms supported, indeed encouraged, the Justice Department's successful attempt to have a legal judgment break up Microsoft. But it's indisputable that tech stocks, as reflected by the Nasdaq index, began taking a terrible fall in March, after it became clear that the break-up had a good chance of becoming reality. Now the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission are pursuing other tech firms, including eBay and America Online. The economic boom that began in 1981 with a key symbolic and substantive event—the firing of the air traffic controllers by Ronald Reagan—could end in 2000 with another key symbolic and substantive event—the suit against Microsoft.

Technology has thrived as a kind of "enterprise zone" of low taxes, low regulation, and very little rent-seeking among the big players. Now, like Old Economy companies, tech firms are whining to politicians, trying to have government give them an edge or punish their competitors. As Dan Balz wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Government's involvement in the business of technology is rapidly growing."

Yes. And this is where Republican presidential hopeful George W. Bush comes in. He can steal a play from Gore's own book and say simply, "From Microsoft to Internet taxes, this administration, with Al Gore's help, has been pursuing risky policies that put our economic growth in jeopardy. Bill Clinton and Tony Blair cast doubt on the property rights of biotech companies, and their stocks crash. The Microsoft suit has led to a depletion in capital values of about $2 trillion. Technology is the engine of this economic boom. Alan Greenspan says it. We all know it. We need to allow Americans the freedom to innovate—without government interference."

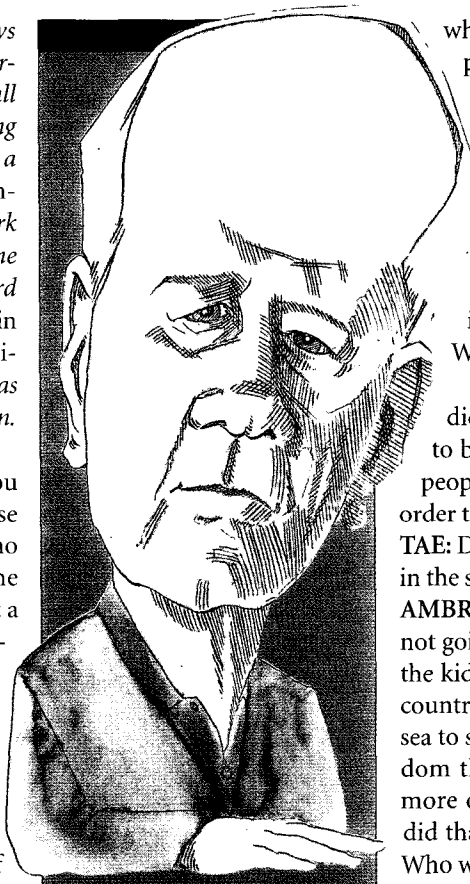
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Live with TAE"

THE BEST-SELLING HISTORIAN TALKS ABOUT D-DAY, EISENHOWER, LEWIS AND CLARK, THE GREAT RAILROADS, AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH HISTORY TODAY.

Stephen Ambrose

Stephen Ambrose is a throwback, in more ways than one. As a University of Wisconsin linebacker-offensive guard, he was the last Big Ten football player to play a 60-minute game; as a best-selling historian, he has written narrative history in a heroic vein, most famously in D-Day *and* Undaunted Courage, *his story of the Lewis and Clark expedition. He has also written multi-volume biographies of Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon. Ambrose's latest book is* Nothing Like It in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869. *Stephen Ambrose was interviewed by* TAE *associate editor Bill Kauffman.*



I wish to hell I'd been in World War II, but I wasn't and I can't do anything about it.

TAE: When you began *Undaunted Courage*, you were advised by a colleague to drop it because "no one is interested in a dead white male who violated sacred Indian territory." Does the book's commercial and critical success suggest a chasm between American readers and American academics?

AMBROSE: Absolutely. It's been a crusade of my life to get my fellow historians in the academy to understand that these are 18- and 19- and 20-year-olds that we're teaching, and they want to know who are our heroes, what did they do, what do we owe to them. And few, if any, academics respond to that. The situation has gotten so bad that if they're teaching Lewis and Clark, they're going to talk about it as the intrusion of Europe into paradise. Well, f--- it, it wasn't a paradise. Going a little bit south, what Cortez discovered was that the Aztecs made slaves out of all the other tribes, and they would cut out their hearts when the victim was alive and eat them.

When academics cover Thomas Jefferson, they want to talk about Sally Hemings. They don't want to talk about the Declaration of Independence or the Northwest Ordinance or the Louisiana Purchase or the Statute of Religious Liberty. When they talk about George Washington, they want to talk about the slaveholder. They don't want to talk about the man who led us to independence, and how he put his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor on the line.

People my age went to college with teachers who had been in graduate school in the Depression, and they just hated big business, and they came close to hating America. Many of today's academics were in college during or immediately after the Vietnam War, and they just hated America.

We need to recognize that our freedom didn't come for free, that our liberties had to be earned, that sacrifices were made, that people made choices and took terrible risks in order to create the country we live in now.

TAE: Do you think your success augurs a change in the sort of history that's written?

AMBROSE: I have no idea. Not tomorrow, it's not going to. It's not so much the professors but the kids today who are aware that they live in a country that is a democracy that stretches from sea to shining sea, and that they have more freedom than anybody's ever enjoyed before and more opportunity. They want to know where did that come from and how did that happen? Who was responsible? What did they do? I think there will be a response to that.

TAE: Over the course of researching and writing *Nothing Like It in the World*, did you change your view of the robber barons who built the Transcontinental Railroad?

AMBROSE: Very much. I was in college in the early '50s, and our professors were really down on the robber barons. The primary example were the Big Four out in California and the leaders of the Union Pacific, who supposedly had robbed the country blind and made tons of money which they used in politics and other nefarious ways. So I did my work and discovered these guys had, first of all, risked everything. Not necessarily their lives, their fortune, and their sacred honor, although damn near that. They couldn't get other capitalists to invest

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in a railroad going out into a wilderness. They had no market and no products to bring back, but they begged and borrowed the money. They took enormous risk, and they got rich out of it, but it took a while. And what they built was a Transcontinental Railroad that had the biggest imaginable effect on America's life.

TAE: Was the Transcontinental Railroad an example of corporate welfare?

AMBROSE: The government helped. The government loaned them money, but those loans didn't begin to cover the cost. They had to be paid back, and they were in 30 years. It's like the G.I. Bill of Rights, which was the single best investment the government ever made. The government got way more in taxes from the men who went to college on the G.I. Bill or built their businesses with a loan. The same was true of the Transcontinental Railroad.

The government also gave land, and that was a gift. But once you got beyond the Sierras or into Wyoming, that land wasn't worth anything, and much of it remains in the railroad's hands today because they can't sell it. So the government helped, and it absolutely could not have been built without government help. But what I was taught as a college student is just wrong.

TAE: Are the colossal public-works projects of the nineteenth century—the Erie Canal, the Transcontinental Railroad—somehow more stirring or more noble than those of the twentieth century? There are no folk songs about building the interstate highway system.

AMBROSE: Not that I know of. The Panama Canal is the closest twentieth-century equivalent. That was built with government money and was a great engineering feat.

TAE: Had you not written about her in *Undaunted Courage*, it's safe to say that the Indian squaw Sacajawea would not be on the new dollar coin. What do you think of the coin?

AMBROSE: I like it very much. It's an excellent portrayal of her and enormously pleasing to me.

TAE: Which character from *Nothing Like It in the World* should be incised upon our coinage?

AMBROSE: It was a team effort: The Union Pacific directors, the Big Four of the Central Pacific, and then all of the surveyors and the construction people and the American people who demanded it. If I had to pick just one, I suppose it would be Theodore Judah. It was his brainchild. Judah died in 1863; so he was not involved in the building. Out on the line, it was Grenville Dodge.

TAE: As dead white guys, I don't suppose there's much chance they'll get on any new coinage soon.

We need to recognize that our freedoms didn't come for free, that our liberties had to be earned, that sacrifices were made to create the country we live in.

AMBROSE: I don't think so.

TAE: You've described Eisenhower as "a hero of mine." It's often said, "Never meet your heroes, for they'll disappoint you." How was Eisenhower in person?

AMBROSE: Better. He was the finest man I've ever known. Whenever I'm facing a tough decision, and especially if there's any morality involved in it, I always ask myself, "what would Eisenhower do?" Now I don't always live up to that. But I do ask myself that.

He was the most moral man I've ever known. I would rank my father in a special category, of course. But Eisenhower knew the difference between right and wrong, and he never did something that was wrong, certainly not knowingly. He almost never lied. He did lie to Hitler about where he was going to invade, and he lied to Khrushchev about what Francis Gary Powers was doing over in the middle of his country. But other than that, I never caught him in a lie.

TAE: My impression is that you regard Eisenhower as the greatest American of the last 50 years.

AMBROSE: Hundred. Now I'm not pushing this, and I know that I'll never get agreement on it, but when people talk about who was the greatest American of the twentieth century, there is no question in my mind who it was.

TAE: Can Richard Nixon be said to be in any way heroic?

AMBROSE: (Laughter) That's not a word that would spring to my mind. He was intelligent, he was a wonderfully adept manipulator—but heroic, no.

TAE: Did you end your work on the Nixon biographies with somewhat greater regard for Nixon?

AMBROSE: The last sentence of my third volume is, "When Nixon resigned, we lost more than we gained." I never thought I would come to that conclusion, but I did, and it was based on damn near ten years of my life working on Nixon's life, and finding out what he had done, much of which I very vehemently disapprove of. I never did learn to like him. But he didn't care about that. He didn't want to be liked.

I did learn to admire him, and I did learn that an awful lot of what he was doing I certainly favor. Not Vietnam, but much else: domestic policy, environmental protection, the economy. There's a lot in Nixon to admire.

TAE: Are there any political figures whom you once respected, but in the course of your research lost your respect?

AMBROSE: Jack Kennedy.

TAE: Why?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMBROSE: Because of his ruthlessness, which went beyond all bounds, and his womanizing. I feel the same way about the current President.

TAE: So if you could send yourself back to 1960, you'd vote for Nixon this time?

AMBROSE: Yes, I would.

TAE: You've interviewed countless veterans of horrific battles. Have you figured out what motivates acts of heroism in battle?

AMBROSE: I haven't figured it out. But I am deeply interested in it and try to understand. I've known quite a number of Medal of Honor recipients and other men who did equally heroic things. They see a situation and they think, "I've got to. I've got to." Now this even includes guys throwing themselves on top of hand grenades because that grenade is going to kill four or five men in the trench. And they do it. Or men who take out an enemy machine-gun post, and then another one, and then another one. "If I don't do it, nobody is going to do it. It's what I need to do."

It's a response to a situation that has no alternative. "If I don't do this, we're going to lose this position, or I'm going to lose my platoon." They respond in a way that can only be called heroic, but they don't really think about it. I've never yet met a hero who said, "I wanted to be a hero, I wanted to get that Medal of Honor." Always they'll tell me, "Listen, I'm not a hero. You want to see a real hero, you go to the cemetery of Normandy, or you go to the cemetery at Iwo Jima. That's where the real heroes are." They sure as hell don't do it because they think they're going to get rich out of it or they're going to get any other kind of reward, other than the reward of knowing they did their best. They're different from you and me. I've never yet met a hero and known what he did and been able to say to myself with confidence, "Geez, I could have done that." I don't know if I could have done it or not, and I'm never going to find out.

TAE: Did you ever feel in interviewing veterans of D-Day that any of them regarded you as somehow lesser because you had not been through what they had been through?

AMBROSE: No. They never feel that way; at least they never expressed that to me. I was nine years old when D-Day happened, and they don't expect me to have been there. Some men were physically incapable. Some men had other jobs that they knew were equally critical, whether on the staff or in supply or whatever.

TAE: Can contemporary generals be heroic? I understand how an infantryman can perform an act of valor, but isn't the best thing that one can say about someone like Schwarzkopf is that he's a good manager?

AMBROSE: I guess that's correct. You could say that of Eisenhower, too. Eisenhower never had a bullet zing by his ear. Eisenhower was never hit by a piece of shrapnel. That's true of most, but not all, generals.

TAE: Are military men who have seen killing and dying more reluctant to wage war than civilian strategists? I think of Eisenhower and his farewell warning against "the military-industrial complex."

AMBROSE: Yes, absolutely. Eisenhower, when he was President, had men come to him, including the joint chiefs and a number of congressmen, and say, "Let's hit that Soviet Union now; we're spending all this money on defense. We can do to Stalin or Khrushchev what we did to Hitler. Let's wipe those bastards out; we've still got a lead in atomic weaponry." And he would say, "You guys are crazy." He wouldn't talk in strategic terms or political terms. He would say, "What do you think that would be like? You would have this vast area all the way from the Elbe River to Vladivostock just destroyed: no roads, no communications, no medicine. Nothing. What the hell would the civilized world do about that?"

He had seen it. He set aside Sunday mornings during the war to sign the letters of condolence for all the men who had been killed under his command. That's a very difficult job.

Right now I'm working on a book on George McGovern's World War II. He was a bomber pilot. He became the most well-known anti-war politician since World War II, but he got a Distinguished Service Cross as a heroic participant in the Second World War. He hated war. He felt that Hitler had to be crushed, and he wanted to do his part. He didn't feel that way about Vietnam.

TAE: Do you ever daydream and imagine yourself on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944?

AMBROSE: I dream about it quite a lot. A friend once said to me, "Steve, you'd have given your right arm to have been on Omaha Beach." I said, "Joe, you're goddamn right I would." But you don't get to choose. You may get shot in the arm and maybe it's going to be amputated, but you might just as easily be shot in the gut and you're going to be dead. And I don't know that I'd want to do that.

TAE: You have an essay on the film *Nixon* in the new book *Oliver Stone's USA*. Stone replies, "Ambrose, who often celebrates martial figures, has never served one day in combat." Are you sensitive to that criticism?

AMBROSE: No. It's my age. The vast majority of males want to know, "Can I do that? Or would I be a coward?" Whether you find out or not is an accident of birth. If you were born in Europe between 1890 and 1900, you were for sure going to find out. But if you were born in the United States when I was, in the mid-1930s, you were too young for World War II. I was graduated from high school in 1953, and I was ready to join the Marines, which is what the classes two and three years ahead of me had done, but Eisenhower ended the war. My dad told me, quite rightly, "You don't want to be part of a peacetime army." And so I went to college and then went into my profession and married, and by the time the Vietnam War broke out, I had five kids. So no, I'm not embarrassed by it. I don't know if I regret it or not. I would have to think about that. I wish to hell I'd been in World War II, but I wasn't and I can't do anything about it.

TAE: You grew up in small-town Wisconsin, a self-described "avid hunter" in a hunting culture. What do you make of the current gun control movement?

AMBROSE: I would like to see all concealable weapons banned. I think that the hunters of America have made a terrible mistake in aligning themselves with the National Rifle Association.

TAE: Richard Lamm, later governor of Colorado, was your roommate in college. Did you support Lamm's short-lived bid for the Reform Party presidential nomination in 1996?

continued on page 47

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DROP DEAD

On June 13, 2000, New Yorkers awakened to a surreal new world: The press had gone law-and-order! For the previous year and a half, the New York media had waged an unrelenting war on the New York Police Department, calling it racist, brutal, and, most bizarrely, over-obsessed with public safety. Now, however, New Yorkers who opened their newspapers or turned on their televisions encountered an unrecognizable entity: that selfsame press thundering for law enforcement and berating the police for going soft on crime.

A true conversion? Hardly. Try pure hypocrisy. What had intervened was New York's Puerto Rican Day Parade and its bestial aftermath, in which marauding males violently fondled, stripped, and robbed dozens of women. While there were clear failures in the NYPD's response to the mayhem, the press's sudden taste for assertive policing was sheer opportunism. In fact, the media's previous campaign against the NYPD lay at the root of the policing failure. And the media's response to the Puerto Rican Day assaults exposed the crudely partisan nature of their NYPD coverage.

To grasp the magnitude of the press's bad faith, one must review the increasingly weird course that coverage of the NYPD had taken in the previous months. Up until then, the standard anti-NYPD theme had been: Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has unleashed New York officers to prey viciously on minority citizens. The press and anti-police activists like the Reverend Al Sharpton turned the tragic shooting of Amadou Diallo by four New York undercover officers in February 1999, into the essence of the NYPD. Never mind that in the same year, fatal shootings by the police—11—were at their lowest point since 1973. Never mind that since 1993, the year before Mayor Giuliani took office, intentional police shootings had dropped over 50 percent, even as the number of officers grew nearly 40 percent. Never mind that New York officers kill civilians far, far less often than in most other big cities.

By early this year, the "racist attack squad" theme had apparently grown a little stale. So the press started pushing a new idea: Crime really isn't so bad after all; so why don't the police just back off? The crown jewel of this new genre was a front-page article in the *New York Times* on April 1, "Antidrug Tactics Exact Price on a Neighborhood, Many Say." The article, by reporter David Barstow, was a jaw-dropping defense of heroin dealing as an integral part of New York life.

Barstow set his pro-crime polemic in a "rough-and-tumble" Brooklyn neighborhood that he claimed had had it with the police's attempt to clean up its drug trade. The "major sentiment" among local residents, Barstow alleged, is that the "New York Police Department has in some fundamental way misunderstood what they expect from law enforcement. They describe a police precinct that mindlessly imposes the mores of Mayberry on [a] neighborhood...not greatly shocked by a little human vice"—that is, by heroin trafficking. Law enforcement, sneered Barstow, was "oblivious to the rhythms of the neighborhood," rhythms that included junkies shooting up in apartment lobbies and traffic congestion from other double-parked users hoping to score. Barstow never disclosed what the residents did "expect from law enforcement," if not freedom from crime.

Barstow credulously allowed the alleged leader in the heroin ring to present himself as a family man unfairly targeted for his drug use. A "gregarious" 23-year-old, who the police claim is a "dangerous gang leader" (insert guffaw from Barstow), is portrayed as a smiling friend to young children. And of course, Barstow quoted black teenagers who rail against completely unprovoked intrusions from the police—a staple of anti-NYPD reporting—without bothering to get the police's side of the story.

Barstow must have chosen his sources extremely carefully. Talk to law-abiding residents of any high-crime, drug-infested neighborhood in New York or elsewhere, as I have, and the unanimous sentiment is, We want more police, we want them now, and we want the dealers out. "We are working citizens, decent citizens," complained Lauria, a resident of 139th Street in Harlem, at a community crime control meeting last April. "Tonight, there were 30 dealers on the stairs of the church. It gets you frustrated. As soon as the police back off, they come back." Scoffing at the "mores of Mayberry" comes at no cost to the liberal white establishment; people living in the midst of the drug-trade would give anything for a little Mayberry in which to raise their children.

Other reporters picked up the "let crime and disorder be" theme. A front-page article in the *New York Observer* lamented the fate of six "offenders" (never identified but most likely low-level drug offenders) who had to spend 18 hours in jail for allegedly trivial infractions. Jeffrey Rosen of the *New Republic* criticized quality-of-life policing—which takes "minor" infractions seriously and is a cornerstone of New York's triumph over crime—and insisted it is inherently biased against minorities. *New York Observer* columnist Terry Golway celebrated his decision to spit in public as an "act of civil disobedience" against Giuliani's repressive regime. When a young car thief, in flight from the police, ran a red light, smashed into an SUV, and ended up sprawled across the front porch of *New York Times* contributing writer Stephen Hall, whom did Hall blame? Not the thief, of course, but the police,

BY HEATHER MAC DONALD

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whose alleged history of trigger-happy shootings had made Hall feel "terror" at their presence.

In another story, the *Times* even shed a tear for some "suburban youth" who were forced to spend a night in jail—without sweetened tea, without vegetarian meals, without air conditioning! reported the paper—for smoking marijuana at a pot legalization rally.

Here is liberal decadence at its worst. Trivializing crime and attacking law enforcement were once staples of elite discourse, but they went into abeyance with the terrifying crime spree of the late 1980s and early '90s. Now that Mayor Giuliani has restored an extraordinary degree of public safety to New York, the press can vicariously take a walk on the wild side yet again.

But all this tolerance for a "little human vice," in the *New York Times*' words, went out the window with the mass groping of women at the Puerto Rican Day Parade. Without question, the assaults were horrific, and the police response clearly inadequate. But the press's outrage towards that police failure was doubly hypocritical. Suddenly, the media discovered the necessity for the very order-maintenance policing that it had recently scorned as discriminatory and repressive. Here is anti-Mayberry David Barstow shocked, absolutely shocked, that before the rampage broke out, "police officers [had] failed again and again...to provide even the mildest of responses to scenes of obvious disorder and lawlessness." "Gross misconduct," such as pot-smoking and public drinking, he reports incredulously, "went virtually ignored" throughout the day.

But wasn't this just the community-sensitive policing for which the enlightened media had been calling? Waist-high littering, defacement of Fifth Avenue, drinking, and pot-smoking are the sorry accoutrements of every Puerto Rican Day Parade. Imagine the police presence and enforcement activity that would have been required to prevent the "obvious disorder and lawlessness" among the 2 million parade-goers, and then imagine the press and activist outrage at this insult to minority pride.

One needn't go far for a precedent. At the funeral for Patrick Dorismond, accidentally killed by an officer in a drug-bust gone awry this March, rioters threw metal barricades and bottles at the police, injuring 23 officers. Al Sharpton blamed the police for the violence: Their decision to don helmets when the bottles started raining down on them, he said, provoked the crowd!

Second, one can't help noticing that the media outrage against crime is selective. Where was the call for more stringent law enforcement as the murders of immigrant cab drivers climbed to ten in the first five months of the year, or after seven employees were shot in cold blood through the head, five fatally, at a Wendy's restaurant in Queens this May? Those attacks did not have the same symbolic usefulness for the elites, since they could not be attributed to racism or sexism.

Remarkably, it is the police's alleged sexism in Central Park that has drawn the most criticism. "Hey, NYPD: Stop Trivializing the Anti-Women Violence," read posters at a National Organization for Women protest in Central Park after the Puerto Rican Day parade. Al Sharpton is suing the police, not the Central Park assailants, for $10 million.

The New York police legitimately feel that they can do no right. If they enforce the law, they are attacked for racism and over-zealousness. If they fail to enforce the law, they are attacked for sexism and violation of professional responsibility. There is no question that the relentless barrage of criticism has made the police back off from law enforcement, especially against minorities; arrests this year would be down 15 to 16 percent without a new street-level anti-drug operation that uses off-duty officers. There is a renewed swagger in street toughs, who know they can now get away with far more before the police will intervene.

In an ideal world, the Central Park violence would have been a wake-up call to the press and other anti-police activists: You cannot mock law enforcement and expect society to remain safe. You cannot attack the police continuously for racism and expect them to zealously wade into politically volatile confrontations with minorities.

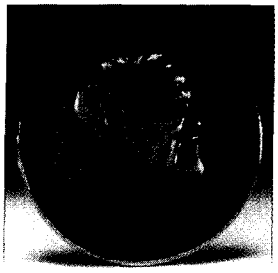
Any signs of such a change of heart? Not a chance. A mere two weeks after the Central Park rampage, the *Times* ran another front-page article by David Barstow (now fully recovered from his Central Park outrage) and other *Times* reporters that focused on "aggressive" law enforcement and the hostility it engenders. The charges against the police had escalated: The police actually cause crime. So say a host of criminals (the *Times*' best source for police-community relations), lovingly quoted by Barstow and his colleagues. The article concludes darkly with a warning from a 38-year-old ex-convict: The police are "just pushing you and pushing you until you do end up breaking the law. They're jumping down on us, and it makes you want to throw a brick."

If New York police officers become ambivalent about law enforcement, who can blame them?

Heather Mac Donald is John M. Olin Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor to City Journal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ordinary PEOPLE, Extraordinary RESCUES



MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER • "GENTLEMEN," DECLARED ANDREW CARNEGIE IN 1904, "WE LIVE IN A HEROIC AGE. NOT SELDOM ARE WE THRILLED BY DEEDS OF HEROISM WHEN MEN AND WOMEN ARE INJURED OR LOSE THEIR LIVES IN ATTEMPTING TO PRESERVE OR RESCUE THEIR FELLOWS; SUCH ARE THE HEROES OF CIVILIZATION. THE HEROES OF BARBARISM MAIMED OR KILLED THEIRS."

If you want to find the true heroes of America today, the best place to look is on the sixteenth floor of an obscure office building in downtown Pittsburgh. There you'll find the headquarters of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, which since 1904 has awarded over 8,000 medals to persons who have risked their lives saving others.

The Carnegie Hero Fund is one of the less well-known of the charities created by the steel tycoon Andrew Carnegie; its investigators frequently have to tell people they're not selling Dale Carnegie courses or inviting them to play at Carnegie Hall. The fund's mission remains largely unchanged since Carnegie's time: to seek out North Americans who perform brave deeds and provide them with a medal and a $3,500 grant. In addition, widows and orphans receive Carnegie pensions, and some children of deceased Carnegie Medal winners receive college scholarships.

In 1999, 102 Carnegie Medals were awarded: 47 for saving people from fires, 20 from drowning, 11 for fending off animal attacks, 11 for assaults from criminals, five from electrocution, and one from suffocation. The youngest hero was Alana Franklin, 11, of Ocala, Florida, who helped free her six-year-old nephew from a gunman who was holding her family hostage. Two septuagenarians also received Carnegie Medals: Burnell Gilleland of Haskell, Texas, who died saving his grandson from a well filled with propane, and Frank S. Hedingham, of Lantzville, British Columbia, who helped fight off a bear in a provincial park.

In the early morning of January 25, 1904, the Allegheny Coal Company's mine in Harwick, Pennsylvania, exploded, killing 181. After the explosion, mining engineer Selwyn Taylor descended into the mine, rescuing one miner but dying afterward from poisonous gases he'd inhaled. Daniel Lyle, an off-duty miner, responded to a call for volunteers. Lyle spent the afternoon helping wounded survivors of the disaster to the surface. But as Lyle went deeper and deeper into the mine, he too was overcome by fumes and died.

Touched by the heroism of Taylor and Lyle, Carnegie ordered gold medals created to honor the two heroes and gave $40,000 to a fund created to assist victims of the disaster. But Carnegie wanted to do more. He had long been interested in ways to aid what he called "the swimming tenth—the industrious workers who keep their heads above water and help themselves." And as a fervent peace advocate, Carnegie believed those who died or injured themselves saving others deserved just as much respect as soldiers killed or wounded in battle.

So in March 1904, Carnegie donated "five million dollars of First Collateral Five Per Cent Bonds of the United States Steel Corporation" to create the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission. Smaller grants were used to create other hero funds in nine other countries.

"I do not expect to stimulate or create heroism by this fund, knowing full well that heroic action is impulsive," Carnegie declared, "but I do believe that, if the hero is injured in his bold attempt to serve or save his fellows, he and those dependent upon him should not suffer pecuniarily."

At the time of the Hero Fund's creation, Carnegie was hounded by the great and the good, who had plenty of ideas about how to spend his money. (Princeton, for example, sent a tag team of its president, Woodrow Wilson, and Grover Cleveland, at the time a Princeton trustee.) But no one suggested to Carnegie that he reward heroes; he thought it up on his own.

"Every other philanthropic fund that Carnegie had ever established had been proposed to him—often forced upon him—by others," notes Carnegie biographer Joseph Frazier Wall. "The Hero Fund came out of his own head and heart, and it delighted him." Perhaps it's because the Hero Fund was Carnegie's favorite among his charities that it remains the only national Carnegie philanthropy to remain in Pittsburgh, instead of being headquartered in New York or Washington.

Associate editor Martin Morse Wooster explores Andrew Carnegie's ideas in The Great Philanthropists and the Problem of Donor Intent.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How has the Fund changed over the years? The types of rescues have certainly changed over time. Carnegie Hero Fund executive director Walter Rutkowski has been looking at early cases; he tells *TAE* that 75 years ago, the fund gave many more awards to heroes who saved others from being trapped in wells, being mauled by runaway horses, or being stuck on an ice floe. Today, there are more rescues from burning cars than in the past. About two-thirds of the awards are usually given to heroes who save others from burning or drowning.

But the way cases are investigated would be familiar to Andrew Carnegie. The Hero Fund's clipping service sends about 80 clips a week to Pittsburgh, and each lead is carefully investigated. People who save others in the line of duty, such as police officers and firefighters, don't qualify nor do members of the military, although many off-duty police, firefighters, and soldiers have received awards. Children considered too young to know what they're doing aren't awarded medals. And rescuers who save the lives of family members only get medals when the rescuer dies or is severely injured.

Once ineligible cases are discarded, cases are then given to one of the four Carnegie Hero Fund case investigators. Case investigators are somewhat like insurance claims investigators, but they are more like newspaper reporters with very long deadlines. In fact, all four present investigators came to the fund with some experience in journalism.

Investigator Paul Snatchko came to the Hero Fund after a stint as a junior staff writer at the Washington, Pennsylvania *Observer-Reporter*. When he was a journalist covering a fire, Snatchko says, "I'd have two hours to cover the story. Now I have four months."

For most of the fund's history, investigators spent up to 40 weeks a year in the field. Their lives were the stuff of romance. A 1935 official history of the fund provides scores of stories of investigators paddling 25 miles down remote Canadian rivers (checking the speed of the current along the way), crossing impenetrable swamps, and dealing with such sinister characters as "Peg-leg Jones." Carnegie investigators, noted a 1909 article in *Century Magazine*, "go forth, each armed with a Kodak and a typewriter, to interview, to analyze, and to summarize."

The investigator's job remained unchanged for the fund's first 70 years. But in 1979, Carter administration economic policies placed the fund in dire peril. With the fund's endowment down to $9 million and double-digit inflation threatening further erosion, fund president Robert Off ordered investigators to cut down their trips in the field. By 1985, fund investigators stayed at their desks. (Although the endowment has now risen to $34 million, investigators have remained in the office.)

But even stuck in the office, Hero Fund investigators are extremely thorough. Consider how a journalist and a fund investigator might cover a rescuer who saved someone from drowning. The reporter on deadline might make a few calls to local lifeguards and to victims. But the Carnegie Hero Fund investigation manual lists 41 questions investigators have to ask someone who witnessed a drowning. How far away was the witness from the incident? How far away was the victim from the shore? What was the water temperature? Was there a current? Was there anything a rescuer could use to aid the victim? Were there lifeguards? How far away were they?

AP, World . . de Photos

Carnegie investigators are also encouraged to leave their personal agendas at home. "Absolute objectivity should be your ideal," the manual states. "Purge yourself of all prejudice, including race, religion, station in society, political philosophy, and the like, none of which is relevant to your goal."

Investigators also have their own set of abbreviations. A rescuer is an RR. A rescued person is a QD. Eyewitnesses are EWs. Other frequently used abbreviations are WAA (witness after an accident), CW (character witness), WTC (witness to conditions), RPR (the person who first reported a case), and BB (burning building). The origins of these abbreviations are not known. They were used in an edition of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the investigators' manual from the 1940s and were probably used for decades before that. But they're terms that generations of Hero Fund investigators have found very handy.

Daniel A. Lyle (top) and Selwyn M. Taylor, whose life-giving sacrifice in the 1904 Harwick Mine disaster inspired Andrew Carnegie to establish the Hero Fund.

Once a case investigation is finished, the cases are then presented to the 21 members of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission board. The board, composed of eminent Pittsburghers who serve without pay, then determines whether a rescuer "voluntarily risked his or her life to an extraordinary degree."

Walter Rutkowski, the Carnegie Hero Fund's executive director, says there's been a good deal of debate within the commission about what an "extraordinary degree" of heroism means. A rescuer, Rutkowski says, "has to face a real threat...he has to fight the shark, not the possibility of a shark."

But the board members, Rutkowski says, want to make sure that the achievements of Carnegie medalists are ones that ordinary people can duplicate. "We don't want people to be supermen, for Pete's sake," Rutkowski says. "In many cases, the water could be deeper, the fire could be hotter, the gun used by a criminal could be of larger caliber." Where the line is drawn, says Rutkowski, will be the subject of endless debate.

Once the board members decide which rescues are worthy of awards, they then determine how many people at each event deserve to receive medals. Usually each rescue results in one medal. Sometimes two people receive a medal for their heroic act. But a particularly ferocious bear resulted in five Carnegie Medals being awarded in 1999.

The bear went on a rampage in a provincial park in Fort Nelson, British Columbia, in August 1997. The beast's trail of terror included mauling Patti McConnell, of Paris, Texas; her 14-year-old son Kelly; Raymond Kitchen of Fort Nelson; Frank S. Hedingham of Lantzville, British Columbia; Ingrid Bailey of Felton, California; and Gary Richmond of Vancouver. After the bear was gunned down by provincial park rangers, Patti McConnell and Raymond Kitchen died, and Kelly McConnell was hospitalized for three months.

"This was one *bad* bear," says Carnegie investigator Marlin Ross. But by stepping in to fight the brute, Ingrid Bailey, Frank Hedingham, Raymond Kitchen, Kelly McConnell, and Gary Richmond all received Carnegie Medals (Kitchen's was awarded posthumously).

In the distant past, the Hero Fund awarded larger prizes to acts of large-scale heroism. A gold medal was struck to reward the sailors who rescued survivors of the *Titanic* (it's now in the Smithsonian). And after the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, an investigator was dispatched to that city with $55,000 in aid.

But these days, rewarding large-scale heroism taxes the Hero Fund's limited resources. Walter Rutkowski recalls that, after the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995, there was some discussion about whether to send investigators, but the fund decided the case was too complex for its resources. A similar reaction occurred after the 1989 San Francisco earthquake, which the fund's staff decided not to investigate after seeing a *Newsweek* cover story titled, "Heroes by the Hundreds." "It's just not viable for us to cover something like that," Rutkowski says.

Why do heroes act the way they do? What does it take for someone to save others from drowning, pull them out of a burning building, or pry them away from the claws of a savage bear?

Ask Walter Rutkowski this question, and he'll pull out a three-inch-thick file labeled "Theory." He refers back to Andrew Carnegie's notion that "heroic action is impulsive," but adds that, when medal recipients are asked this question, they usually respond, "I couldn't stand by and do nothing," or "I learned this in Sunday school," or "This is how I was brought up." "The basic reason people get involved is one word—empathy," Rutkowski says.

Investigator Marlin Ross, who has been working for the Hero Fund for nearly 20 years, has a favorite story involving a case where a 40-year-old man pulled a teenager out of a burning car. The teenager was clearly drunk. "I know when I was that age I did some stupid things," the hero told Ross. "I just hope this guy lives long enough to tell his kids the same things."

The expert on what makes Carnegie heroes act is sociologist Samuel Oliner. An emeritus professor at Humboldt State University, Oliner knows the deeds of rescuers firsthand. A Holocaust survivor, Oliner was saved from Nazi tyranny by a Polish farm family who took him in and taught him enough of the catechism to enable him to pose as a Catholic until the end of the war.

Oliner has spent his professional life studying altruism. He's surveyed Christians and Jews who saved people from the Holocaust, hospice volunteers, and winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Victoria Cross. He's surveyed 210 representative Carnegie Medalists for a book in progress.

According to Oliner, Carnegie Medalists tend to have several virtues in common. They were brought up with a sense that it was their duty to help others. They are self-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confident people who believe they can perform dangerous deeds. They tend to have strong religious faith; if Christian, they tend to say, "Jesus would have wanted me to do this."

About 90 percent of the people Oliner surveyed were male. That's close to the historical average; since 1904, male Carnegie Medalists have outnumbered female ones by nine to one. Oliner believes this gender gap exists because "women are not expected to do dangerous things." (Rescues that involve less physical danger, such as hospice volunteers and Holocaust rescuers, tend to be more evenly split between the sexes.)

CARNEGIE MEDALISTS WERE BROUGHT UP WITH A SENSE THAT IT WAS THEIR DUTY TO HELP OTHERS.

The heroes themselves are modest about why they did what they did. Clarence Purdy, a 70-year-old retired foreman from Columbia Falls, Montana, was celebrating his birthday in 1998 by picking apples and listening to a bluegrass concert. As he was heading home, he saw Jerry Pate's car on fire in a ditch. Purdy kicked out the glass in Pate's window, grabbed Pate, and dragged him away from the burning vehicle. Just as Purdy finished hauling Pate to safety, the car's battery exploded, engulfing the car in flames.

Purdy didn't have to stop. He had recently lost a leg due to a blood clot. And while he was dragging Pate to safety, many other cars roared past the narrow two-lane highway—some at 65 mph. "I did it because the guy was unconscious and he would have faded in three minutes," Purdy says. "I could have gone to get help, but I didn't have the time."

Kerry Clark became a hero in February 1999. He was sitting in the back yard of his farm in Medina, Ohio, walking his dog on a Sunday morning. It was a frosty winter day, and Clark saw a small airplane crash in the nearby woods. The plane was filled with agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF), and was on fire. In addition, the plane was packed with ammunition.

When Clark arrived, BATF agent Roger Guthrie, despite a broken ankle, was dragging his fellow passenger Eric Frey to safety. Clark, a tow-truck driver, had extensive experience in freeing people from wrecks; so he helped Guthrie drag Frey and the plane's unconscious pilot, David Hall, to safety. As Guthrie and Clark worked, ammunition exploded, adding to the danger.

"Somebody needed to help," Clark says. "You do it because you have to." (Agent Guthrie also received a Carnegie Medal, but declined to be interviewed.)

Stanton Thompson's moment of glory came during a severe thunderstorm on the evening of September 13, 1998. Thompson, who heads a county office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was helping a friend in Concordia, Missouri, run his ice cream shop when he heard cries for help. Three boys were playing in a drainage ditch and were swept 60 feet into a storm sewer. One of the boys managed to get out, but Gregory Kueck and Cameron Holsten were clinging on to metal reinforcement bars dangerously close to a raging waterfall.

Thompson had called 911, and firefighters had arrived on the scene and were trying to lower life jackets to the boys. But Thompson is no amateur; he's a Vietnam and Gulf War vet who's taken advanced Red Cross training. He saw that it would take too long for the lifejackets to reach the boys, who were cold, tired, and hanging on for their lives. "I looked at the sewer, sized up my ability, and went in," Thompson recalls.

As he walked toward Kueck, a sudden burst of water caused him to momentarily lose his balance, coming dangerously close to falling over the waterfall to his death. But Thompson managed to right himself and then grabbed a lifeline from the firefighters. He then attached lifejackets first to Kueck and then to Holsten and carried them both to safety.

"My mother and father were both farm people," Thompson said, "and one of the things you were taught on the farm was to help a neighbor in need." He adds that, religiously, he is "a devout person," and that after he was originally knocked down in the water, "something—I can't say what—allowed me to get aright in the sewer."

With his Carnegie Hero Fund grant, Thompson has set up a trust fund for the three boys' college education. He's also become good friends with the boys' parents—and makes sure he calls the boys whenever there's bad weather. "If there's another storm, the boys know they will hear from me," Thompson says.

The stories of Thompson, Clark, and Purdy are typical. There are scores of other heroes discovered by the fund, most ordinary Americans whose brave feats would have remained obscure if the Carnegie Hero Fund did not exist.

Of all the awards Walter Rutkowski has handed out, the one that gives him the greatest pleasure is the case of Gerald Yoribe, who died in 1986 saving his girlfriend, Tina Jung, from the treacherous waters off of San Francisco's Bodega Bay. The only notice of Yoribe's feat was two paragraphs in an obscure Japanese-American weekly newspaper. "If we hadn't found him, Yoribe would never have gotten any recognition," Rutkowski says.

So the Carnegie Hero Fund forges on, with its unique task of finding people who risked their lives saving others. And each one of the Carnegie Medalists fulfills a command Jesus made during the Last Supper, one that's inscribed on every Carnegie Medal: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HEROES of the VIETNAM Generation

BY JAMES WEBB • THE RAPIDLY DISAPPEARING COHORT OF AMERICANS THAT ENDURED THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND THEN FOUGHT WORLD WAR II IS RECEIVING QUITE A SEND-OFF FROM THE LEADING LIGHTS OF THE SO-CALLED '60S GENERATION. TOM BROKAW HAS PUBLISHED TWO ORAL HISTORIES OF "THE GREATEST GENERATION" THAT FEATURE ORDINARY PEOPLE DOING THEIR DUTY AND SUGGEST THAT SUCH CONDUCT WAS HISTORICALLY UNIQUE.

Chris Matthews of "Hardball" is fond of writing columns praising the Navy service of his father while castigating his own baby boomer generation for its alleged softness and lack of struggle. William Bennett gave a startlingly condescending speech at the Naval Academy a few years ago comparing the heroism of the "D-Day Generation" to the drugs-and-sex nihilism of the "Woodstock Generation." And Steven Spielberg, in promoting his film *Saving Private Ryan*, was careful to justify his portrayals of soldiers in action based on the supposedly unique nature of World War II.

An irony is at work here. Lest we forget, the World War II generation now being lionized also brought us the Vietnam War, a conflict which today's most conspicuous voices by and large opposed, and in which few of them served. The "best and brightest" of the Vietnam age group once made headlines by castigating their parents for bringing about the war in which they would not fight, which has become the war they refuse to remember.

Pundits back then invented a term for this animus: the "generation gap." Long, plaintive articles and even books were written examining its manifestations. Campus leaders, who claimed precocious wisdom through the magical process of reading a few controversial books, urged fellow baby boomers not to trust anyone over 30. Their elders who had survived the Depression and fought the largest war in history were looked down upon as shallow, materialistic, and out of touch.

Those of us who grew up on the other side of the picket line from that era's counter-culture can't help but feel a little leery of this sudden gush of appreciation for our elders from the leading lights of the old counter-culture. Then and now, the national conversation has proceeded from the dubious assumption that those who came of age during Vietnam are a unified generation in the same sense as their parents were, and thus are capable of being spoken for through these fickle elites.

In truth, the "Vietnam generation" is a misnomer. Those who came of age during that war are permanently divided by different reactions to a whole range of counter-cultural agendas, and nothing divides them more deeply than the personal ramifications of the war itself. The sizable portion of the Vietnam age group who declined to support the counter-cultural agenda, and especially the men and women who opted to serve in the military during the Vietnam War, are quite different from their peers who for decades have claimed to speak for them. In fact, they are much like the World War II generation itself. For them, Woodstock was a side show, college protestors were spoiled brats who would have benefited from having to work a few jobs in order to pay their tuition, and Vietnam represented not an intellectual exercise in draft avoidance or protest marches but a battlefield that was just as brutal as those their fathers faced in World War II and Korea.

Few who served during Vietnam ever complained of a generation gap. The men who fought World War II were their heroes and role models. They honored their fathers' service by emulating it, and largely agreed with their fathers' wisdom in attempting to stop Communism's reach in Southeast Asia. The most accurate poll of their attitudes (Harris, 1980) showed that 91 percent were glad they'd served their country, 74 percent enjoyed their time in the service, and 89 percent agreed with the statement that "our troops were asked to fight in a war which our political leaders in Washington would not let them win." And most importantly, the castigation they received upon returning home was not from the World War II generation, but from the very elites in their age group who supposedly spoke for them.

Nine million men served in the military during the Vietnam war, three million of whom went to the Vietnam theater. Contrary to popular mythology, two-thirds of these were volunteers, and 73 percent of those who died were volunteers. While some attention has been paid recently

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to the plight of our prisoners of war, most of whom were pilots, there has been little recognition of how brutal the war was for those who fought it on the ground. Dropped onto the enemy's terrain 12,000 miles away from home, America's citizen-soldiers performed with a tenacity and quality that may never be truly understood. Those who believe the war was fought incompetently on a tactical level should consider Hanoi's recent admission that 1.4 million of its soldiers died on the battlefield, compared to 58,000 total U.S. dead. Those who believe that it was a "dirty little war" where the bombs did all the work might contemplate that it was the most costly war the U.S. Marine Corps has ever fought—five times as many dead as World War I, three times as many dead as in Korea, and more total killed and wounded than in all of World War II.

Significantly, these sacrifices were being made at a time the United States was deeply divided over our effort in Vietnam. The baby-boom generation had cracked apart along class lines as America's young men were making difficult, life-or-death choices about serving. The better academic institutions became focal points for vitriolic protest against the war, with few of their graduates going into the military. Harvard College, which had lost 691 alumni in World War II, lost a total of 12 men in Vietnam from the classes of 1962 through 1972 combined. Those classes at Princeton lost six, at MIT two. The media turned ever-more hostile. And frequently the reward for a young man's having gone through the trauma of combat was to be greeted by his peers with studied indifference or outright hostility.

What is a hero? My heroes are the young men who faced the issues of war and possible death, and then weighed those concerns against obligations to their country. Citizen-soldiers who interrupted their personal and professional lives at their most formative stage, in the timeless phrase of the Confederate Memorial in Arlington National Cemetry, "not for fame or reward, not for place or for rank, but in simple obedience to duty, as they understood it." Who suffered loneliness, disease, and wounds with an often contagious élan. And who deserve a far better place in history than that now offered them by the so-called spokesmen of our so-called generation.

Mr. Brokaw, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Spielberg, meet my Marines.

•••

1969 was an odd year to be in Vietnam. Second only to 1968 in terms of American casualties, it was the year made famous by Hamburger Hill, as well as the gut-wrenching *Life* cover story showing the pictures of 242 Americans who had been killed in one average week of fighting. Back home, it was the year of Woodstock, and of numerous anti-war rallies that culminated in the Moratorium march on Washington. The My Lai massacre hit the papers and was seized upon by the anti-war movement as the emblematic moment of the war. Lyndon Johnson left Washington in utter humiliation. Richard Nixon entered the scene, destined for an even worse fate.

In the An Hoa Basin southwest of Danang, the Fifth Marine Regiment was in its third year of continuous combat operations. Combat is an unpredictable and inexact environment, but we were well-led. As a rifle platoon and company commander, I served under a succession of three regimental commanders who had cut their teeth in World War II, and four different battalion commanders, three of whom had seen combat in Korea. The company commanders were typically captains on their second combat tour in Vietnam, or young first lieutenants like myself who were given companies after many months of "bush time" as platoon commanders in the Basin's tough and unforgiving environs.

The Basin was one of the most heavily contested areas in Vietnam, its torn, cratered earth offering every sort of wartime possibility. In the mountains just to the west, not far from the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the North Vietnamese Army operated an infantry division from an area called Base Area 112. In the valleys of the Basin, main-force Viet Cong battal-

Members of Delta Company, Fifth Marine Regiment, at the An Hoa combat base, Vietnam, 1969.

ions whose ranks were 80 percent North Vietnamese Army regulars moved against the Americans every day. Local Viet Cong units sniped and harassed. Ridge lines and paddy dikes were laced with sophisticated booby traps of every size, from a hand grenade to a 250-pound bomb. The villages sat in the rice paddies and tree lines like individual fortresses, crisscrossed with trenches and spider holes, their homes sporting bunkers capable of surviving direct hits from large-caliber artillery shells. The Viet Cong infrastructure was intricate and permeating. Except for the old and the very young, villagers who did not side with the Communists had either

Former Secretary of the Navy James Webb was awarded the Navy Cross, Silver Star, and Bronze Star medals for heroism as a Marine in Vietnam. His novels include The Emperor's General *and* Fields of Fire.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been killed or driven out to the government-controlled enclaves near Danang.

In the rifle companies we spent the endless months patrolling ridge lines and villages and mountains, far away from any notion of tents, barbed wire, hot food, or electricity. Luxuries were limited to what would fit inside one's pack, which after a few "humps" usually boiled down to letter-writing material, towel, soap, toothbrush, poncho liner, and a small transistor radio.

We moved through the boiling heat with 60 pounds of weapons and gear, causing a typical Marine to drop 20 percent of his body weight while in the bush. When we stopped we dug chest-deep fighting holes and slit trenches for toilets. We slept on the ground under makeshift poncho hootches, and when it rained we usually took our hootches down because wet ponchos shined under illumination flares, making great targets. Sleep itself was fitful, never more than an hour or two at a stretch for months at a time as we mixed daytime patrolling with night-time ambushes, listening posts, foxhole duty, and radio watches. Ringworm, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery were common, as was trench foot when the monsoons came. Respite was rotating back to the mud-filled regimental combat base at An Hoa for four or five days, where rocket and mortar attacks were frequent and our troops manned defensive bunkers at night.

Which makes it kind of hard to get excited about tales of Woodstock, or camping at the Vineyard during summer break.

THREE-QUARTERS OF AMERICA'S VIETNAM DEAD WERE VOLUNTEERS.

We had been told while in training that Marine officers in the rifle companies had an 85 percent probability of being killed or wounded, and the experience of "Dying Delta," as our company was known, bore that out. Of the officers in the bush when I arrived, our company commander was wounded, the weapons platoon commander was wounded, the first platoon commander was killed, the second platoon commander was wounded twice, and I, commanding the third platoon, was wounded twice. The enlisted troops in the rifle platoons fared no better. Two of my original three squad leaders were killed, the third shot in the stomach. My platoon sergeant was severely wounded, as was my right guide. By the time I left my platoon I had gone through six radio operators, five of them casualties.

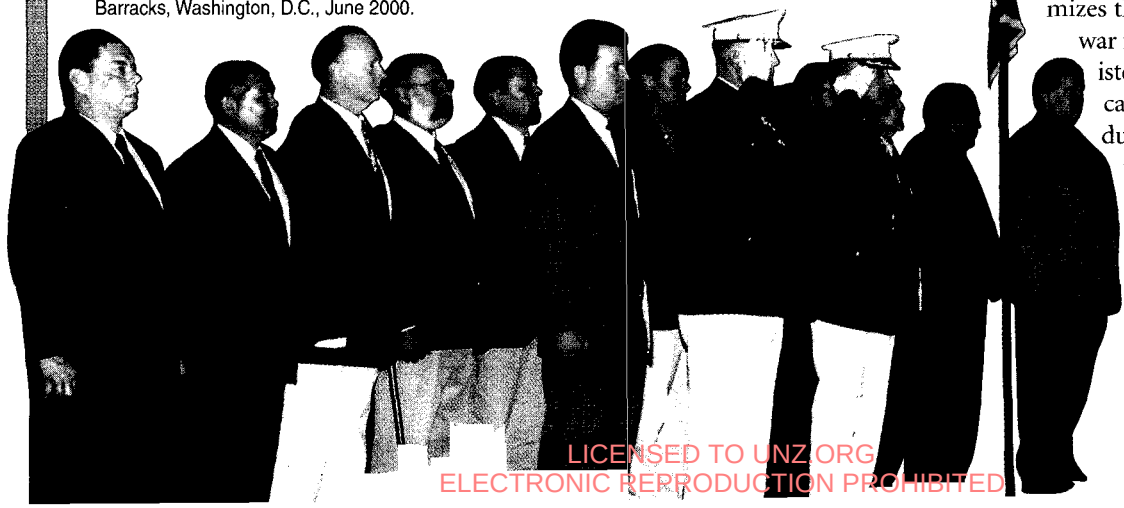
These figures were hardly unique; in fact, they were typical. Many other units—for instance, those who fought the hill battles around Khe Sanh, or were with the famed Walking Dead of the Ninth Marine Regiment, or were in the battle for Hue City or at Dai Do—had it far worse.

When I remember those days and the very young men who spent them with me, I am continually amazed, for these were mostly recent civilians barely out of high school, called up from the cities and the farms to do their year in Hell and then return. Visions haunt me every day, not of the nightmares of war but of the steady consistency with which my Marines faced their responsibilities, and of how uncomplaining most of them were in the face of constant danger. The salty, battle-hardened 20-year-olds teaching green 19-year-olds the intricate lessons of that hostile battlefield. The unerring skill of the young squad leaders as we moved through unfamiliar villages and weed-choked trails in the black of night. The quick certainty with which they moved when coming under enemy fire. Their sudden tenderness when a fellow Marine was wounded and needed help. Their willingness to risk their lives to save other Marines in peril. To this day it stuns me that their own countrymen have so completely missed the story of their service, lost in the bitter confusion of the war itself.

Like every military unit throughout history we had occasional laggards, cowards, and complainers. But in the aggregate these Marines were the finest people I have ever been around. It has been my privilege to keep up with many of them over the years since we all came home. One finds in them very little bitterness about the war in which they fought. The most common regret, almost to a man, is that they were not able to do more—for each other and for the people they came to help.

It would be redundant to say that I would trust my life to these men. Because I already have, in more ways than I can ever recount. I am alive today because of their quiet, unaffected heroism. Such valor epitomizes the conduct of Americans at war from the first days of our existence. That the boomer elites can canonize this sort of conduct in our fathers' generation while ignoring it in our own is more than simple oversight. It is a conscious, continuing travesty.

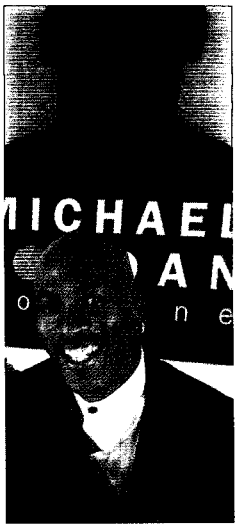
Former members of Third Platoon, Delta Company are honored during an Evening Parade at the Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., June 2000.



Scavone Photography

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Balls, and IDOLS



AP/World Wide Photos

I GREW UP IN NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE, IF ONE WEREN'T A GOOD ATHLETE, ONE HAD BETTER BE WITTY OR EXTREMELY WILY OR AT LEAST FLEET OF FOOT. "VERY PROBLEMATIC," I CAN HEAR A CERTAIN KIND OF PSYCHOLOGIST MUTTERING AS HE READS THIS, BUT IT NEVER SEEMED AT ALL PROBLEMATIC TO ME, WHO WAS A RESPECTABLE IF NEVER FIRST-CLASS ATHLETE AND A KID WITH A HARDY APPETITE FOR GAMES.

A block behind the apartment building in which we lived, down along Lake Michigan at Farewell Beach, the football team of Sullivan High School practiced. Sullivan's was not a winning team. Its coach was a barrel-chested, short-legged man named Ralph Margolis, who used to swear at his players with Yiddish expletives. The word *shtunk*—denoting an ungrateful fool, an unpleasant *schlemiel*—was easily his favorite. The only players the coach never called *shtunk*, at least while I was watching, were two brothers named Gordy and Ronnie Green.

The Green brothers were so heavily muscled that it seemed to me they must have lifted weights with their faces, for their cheeks, their foreheads, even their hair seemed powerful. Gordy Green was a fullback, his younger and somewhat smaller brother Ronnie a halfback. They were Jewish tough guys of the kind that appear in Isaac Babel's Benya Kirk stories: true brutes, or so it seemed to a small boy of eight or nine standing on the sidelines watching them crash into the line, tossing up clouds of dust, trotting back into the huddle unharmed from crushing collision after crushing collision. I admired them without qualification.

What made a young boy admire two much older boys—boys who had then seemed to him men—when he had been told time and again, and in fact quite believed, that it wasn't muscle but brains that counted in life? The first qualification for a hero, in the eyes of a small boy—and not, I suspect, in those of a small boy alone—is the ability to fend off fear. The Green brothers seemed beautifully equipped for this, or so it seemed to me. Far from seeming in any way fearful, they, it occurred to me then, were themselves worth fearing. At that time, without the least hesitation, I should have traded whatever chance I might have had for a good mind for one of their powerful bodies.

From round this time, too, I recall another athlete named Sid Cohen, a softball player extraordinaire. Tall, lean, sandy-colored hair brushed *en brosse* off his high tanned forehead, he was an elegantly fielding first baseman who seemed to blast a homerun every time he came to bat. I saw him play on a field without walls, and his booming homers were never power-alley jobs but instead towering shots that flew well over the heads of right fielders, no matter how deeply they played him. Sid Cohen drove a cream-colored Plymouth convertible and seemed always to have a beautiful girl waiting for him. He was the Achilles of Farewell Beach, but, near as I could tell, with two perfectly good heels.

It was not long after my admiration for the Green boys and Sid Cohen had set in that my interest in athletes went national. This came about through my reading of a monthly magazine called *Sport*, which I began to do with great intensity around the age of 11 or 12. The magazine was devoted to the subject of its title, but even more, in those days, to uncomplicated hero worship. Sport had nothing to do with criticizing athletes; its editors and writers were as far as possible from being, as a long and justly defunct statesman once put it, "nattering nabobs of negativism." If you were written about in *Sport*, you were, *ipso facto*, written about as a hero. Nor, best as I can remember, did the magazine go in much for personalities. A characteristic line, from a piece on the Yankee catcher Yogi Berra, that has rattled around in my head all these years had it that "Yogi likes plenty of pizza in the off-season, when he can generally be found hanging around his friend Yankee shortstop Phil Rizzuto's bowling alley." The same article, written today, might inform us that its subject, with the aid of kin-network therapy, had survived his second divorce in fairly good shape, though he greatly regrets an unfortunate deal on a condominium complex in Acapulco, a leveraged buy-out, in which he had invested heavily.

To *Sport*, too, I owe my first interest in history, for the magazine ran a series of articles under the rubric "The Sport Classic" about great athletic heroes of the past. I recall being much moved by articles on such figures as Jim Thorpe, Bill

Joseph Epstein is writing a book about snobbery in America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tilden, Lou Gehrig, and Red Grange. The theme of these articles was that great athletes were great-hearted; even famous horses—Man O' War, Whirlaway, Sea Biscuit—were great-hearted. How one acquired a great heart on one's own was a bit less clear. Sometimes it seemed one was born with it. But more often you worked hard, faced adversity straight on, didn't let life in its harsher aspects defeat you, and if you came through often enough under pressure-laden circumstances, lo! you made it—you were a hero. This still seems to me not so dumb.

GALLANTRY IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF ELEGANCE.

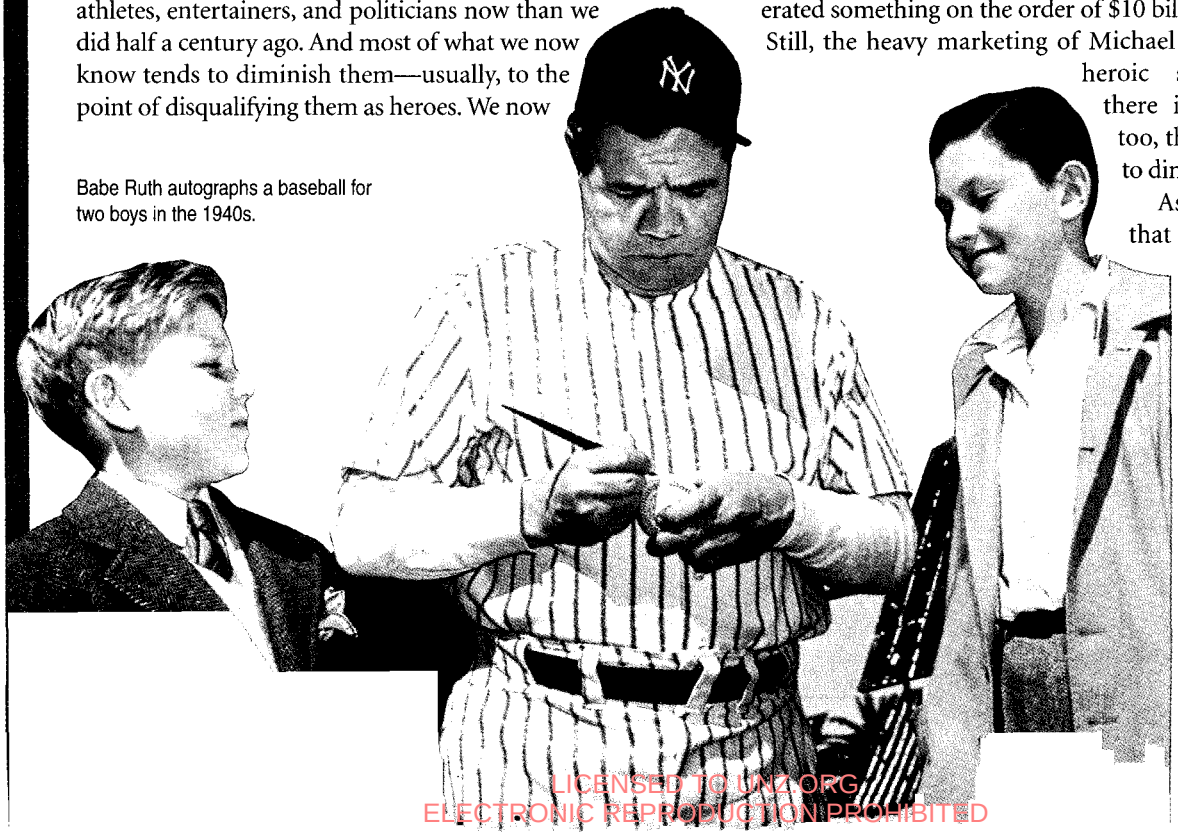
A boy's hero worship almost invariably latches onto heroes whose accomplishments are essentially physical, warriors and athletes chief among them. Not only do these men—they have, historically, overwhelmingly been men—choose to disregard pain but many of them risk premature destruction, which, as Maupassant says in his story "The Horla," is "the source of all human dread." The most rudimentary form heroism takes is that of defying death; and for this reason we honor as heroes those men and women who have knowingly risked—and frequently lost—their lives. One of the reasons that one tends to admire heroes is that they have qualities that one does not have, or at least that one is uncertain about having. Here is a distinction between heroes and today's "role models." The former are worth admiring because they are (almost certainly) better than you; the latter aren't truly that much better—that is, apparently, the utility of them—so that it should be no great trick to emulate them. Role-models seem to be people who didn't get into trouble; heroes acted magnificently under pressure. Big difference, I'd say.

Heroes have been less easy to come by with the passing of years. For one thing, we know a lot more about the athletes, entertainers, and politicians now than we did half a century ago. And most of what we now know tends to diminish them—usually, to the point of disqualifying them as heroes. We now know about the philandering of every U.S. President since Franklin Delano Roosevelt, including even those who had lust only "in their heart." We now know, with some precision, how stupid most actors are. I'm very pleased never to have heard Gary Cooper speak off the screen; I much regret having heard Paul Newman do so. Something there is about the current age that works to cut ostensibly heroic people down to size—a little less, even, than normal human size.

Living in Chicago, I had a swell opportunity, over roughly a decade, to watch, in Michael Jordan, an athletic genius play just about every chord the athletic heroism scale allows. If it is still permitted to cite him, Bobby Knight (the Bloomington Strangler) has called Michael Jordan a greater basketball player than we, our children, and our grandchildren are ever likely to see. It's probably true. Michael did things on the basketball floor that I, a pretty good boy fantast, hadn't the imagination to dream of doing. He staged more come-from-behind, playing-ill, last-second, overtime victories than I can remember and that are probably good for a now-aging couch potato's heart.

Yet Michael—the divine Michael, as I used to think of him—talked too much, and too clichedly. I was delighted he never politicized himself, perhaps a tempting thing to do in Chicago, the headquarters of the Reverend Jesse Jackson, that permanent transient. He never whined, kvetched, bitched. But he did talk an awful public relations gibberish, always so careful to say the right—and usually highly boring—thing. (The one exception was when, asked to give advice to his teammate Dennis Rodman, Michael advised him to wear trousers as often as possible.) My guess is that he spoke with such relentless dullness because he didn't want to queer the deal on all his endorsements. People said that, at his peak, Michael Jordan generated something on the order of $10 billion for the economy. Still, the heavy marketing of Michael took away from his heroic stature. Something there is about capitalism, too, that apparently works to diminish heroes. Pity.

As I grow older, I find that I am simultaneously less trustful of heroes and increasingly in need of them. To worship false heroes is quite as foolish as worshipping false gods, and in hero worship as in other activities there is no fool like a less-than-young fool. I take some small satisfaction that such



Babe Ruth autographs a baseball for two boys in the 1940s.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hero worshipping as I have gone in for has never entailed subscribing to a hero's doctrine as part of the deal. One carries enough luggage throughout life without having to lug around another person's ideals. On the other hand, true heroes remind me of life's possibilities—of how difficulties can be overcome, of how often perseverance pays off, of how lovely life can be when fear is conquered, of how gallantry is the highest form of elegance.

Had I at any time in my life been a true hero—had I won the big game, or survived the jungles of Vietnam, or gone into the burning building to save the infant—I wonder if I might regard myself differently than I do now. At a minimum, I would have had the self-assurance of knowing that, under pressure, I had come through. As things are now, I only hope that, should the occasion for heroism arise, I might come through. A vast difference between the two—knowing and hoping. Contemplating heroic lives, lives distinguished by physical or psychological courage, and sometimes both, helps to fortify one's own soul and to inspire one to be a little better than, deep down, one worries one is.

HEROISM GOES to the Dogs

BY DIANA SCHAUB • HEROISM HAS GONE TO THE DOGS. IN THE OLD DAYS, EPIC HEROES HAD DOGS—GREAT-HEARTED AND VALIANT LIKE THEMSELVES, OF COURSE. ODYSSEUS HAD HIS ARGOS, THE DEERSLAYER HIS HECTOR. OVER THE LAST CENTURY, HOWEVER, THE DOGS HAVE DISPLACED THE HEROES.

Archive Photos

From 1926 forward, when *A Dog of the Regiment* was the most popular motion picture of the year, top billing has gone to Rin-Tin-Tin, Lassie, Old Yeller, White Fang, Benji, Sounder, Beethoven, Air Bud, Shiloh, Fluke, and My Dog Skip.

This "caninization" of heroism does not necessarily mean heroism's wrack and ruin. The four-leggers have acquitted themselves rather well as celluloid role models. Marjorie Garber, in her book *Dog Love*, explains how "the dog becomes the repository of those model human properties that we have cynically ceased to find among humans. Where today can we find the full panoply of William Bennett's *Book of Virtues*—from Courage and Responsibility to Loyalty and Family Values—but in Lassie and Beethoven and Millie and Checkers and Spot?" Heroism is in the safekeeping of man's best friend.

Faithful as always, dogs keep trying to restore our heroism to us. In almost every dog movie I can think of, the dog serves as the source of instruction for various benighted, misguided, or simply young humans, especially boys. Boys need an education in the manly virtues that only a boy's dog can give. As the theme song to *Old Yeller* has it, "Old Yeller was a fighter, a rootin' tootin' fighter. In any scrape he knew just what to do. A rough and ready feller, and though his coat was yeller, his bold Texas heart was true blue." By movie's end, the dog has readied the boy for his passage into manhood. In the best dog movies (*Where the Red Fern Grows* comes to mind), that rite of passage usually includes the loss of the dog and a confrontation with mortality.

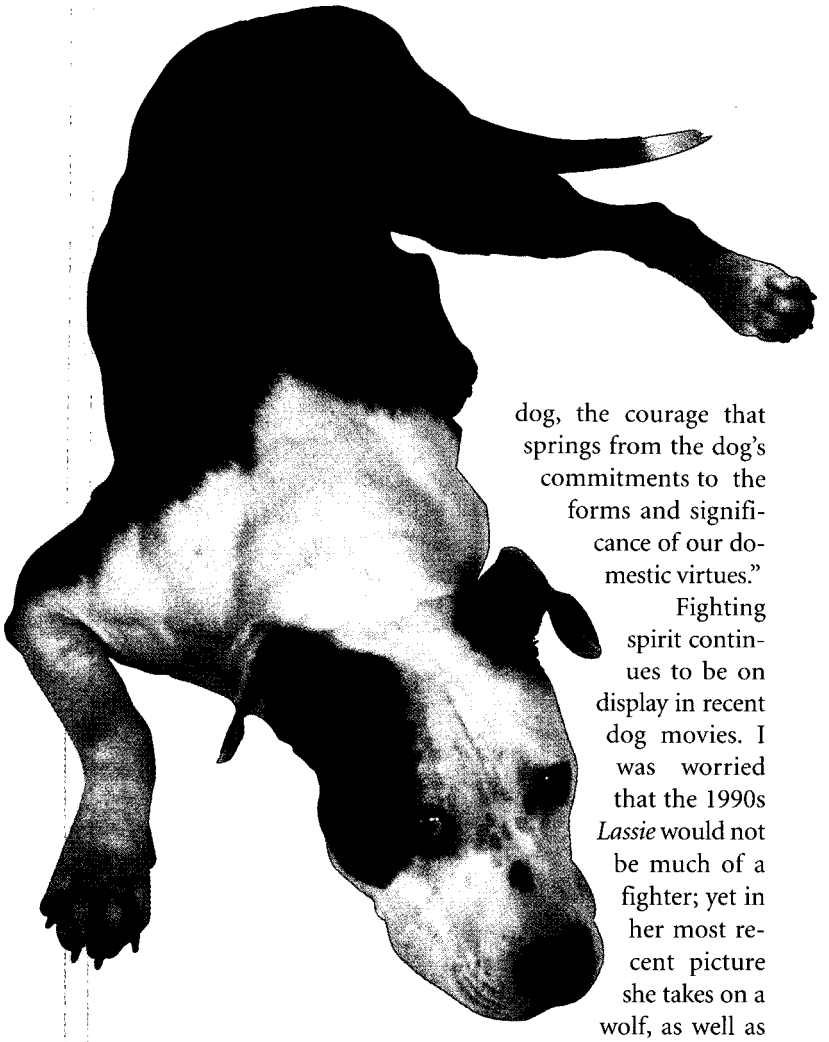
The only movie I have seen about a man (rather than a boy) and his dog is not American. (*Turner and Hooch* [1989] doesn't quite make it, since Tom Hanks as Turner is just an overgrown boy.) *Jock of the Bushveld*, a 1992 South African film, tells a wonderfully non-didactic tale of two charming and scrappy runts, one canine and one human. After the man rescues the pup from the drowning tub, the film follows the pair as the man takes on South Africa's class hierarchies and the dog, a pit bull, takes on just about anything that moves, including a crocodile, a baboon, and several large game animals. The two are purely and simply soulmates. The presentation of the dog is entirely naturalistic, without any of the artificiality or sentimentality of Disney fare. Jock doesn't talk or even look meaningfully at his human partner. He just lives his dog life to the full, with herculean energy and courage. There is nothing fluffy or slobbery or good-naturedly muttly about him. His musculature and the desire that animates it are visible in his every movement.

ighting spirit is a major component of canine heroism.

It is remarkable that dogs will come to the defense of members of another species. Dogs will scorn life itself in fidelity to an enlarged conception of what constitutes "one's own." Another well-known writer on dogs, Vicki Hearne, points out that a wolf "will not have the courage of a good

Diana Schaub is associate professor of political science at Loyola College in Maryland and the devoted sidekick of two great-hearted and valiant Portuguese water dogs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



dog, the courage that springs from the dog's commitments to the forms and significance of our domestic virtues."

Fighting spirit continues to be on display in recent dog movies. I was worried that the 1990s *Lassie* would not be much of a fighter; yet in her most recent picture she takes on a wolf, as well as two evildoers on dune bikes. Even though the staging of the fights is nowhere near as graphic as in the older dog movies (which were pre-Humane Society I suppose), the lesson remains: Goodness cannot go forth unarmed into the world.

Dog heroes are not always fictional. Each issue of *Dog Fancy* magazine relates a true tale of protection, like the Vizla who cornered a home-invader, rescuing his young mistress from a convicted child molester. The single woman jogging with her alert Doberman or impressive Rottweiler demonstrates that there is still some appreciation for this aspect of the canine temperament. Indeed, in an era of equality when women affect to scorn male protection—and men, in turn, show little aptitude for it—dogs often replace men. Dogs are born protectors; men require considerable training.

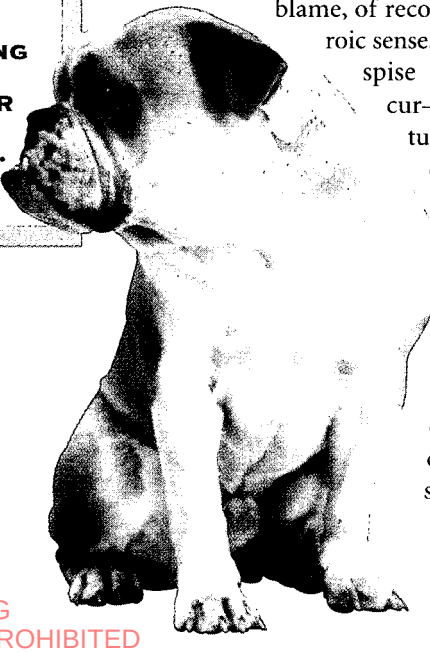
Every dog lover (and lover of justice) must hope that Nicole Brown Simpson's Akita—the only witness to her murder—will one day find himself alone with an unarmed O.J., just like the dog Shep in *The Painted Hills* (1951). In that movie, Shep drove his master's killer over a cliff to his death, after human justice proved a travesty.

FAITHFUL AS ALWAYS, DOGS KEEP TRYING TO RESTORE OUR HEROISM TO US.

At the same time that we celebrate the dog avenger, it is undeniable that we have become ambivalent about the aggressive impulse that is so inextricably bound up with the virtue of loyalty. Witness the attempt to brand certain dog breeds as vicious, and in some locales, to ban them outright. The breed most maligned is the American Staffordshire Terrier (aka, the pit bull). This is a breed of legendary loyalty. It was the first American breed and, in an earlier era, was closely identified with the American national character (from Teddy Roosevelt's pit bull to Our Gang's Pete the Pup). I think one could say that our current quandary over manliness and its relation to civilization is summed up in the revaluation of the pit bull.

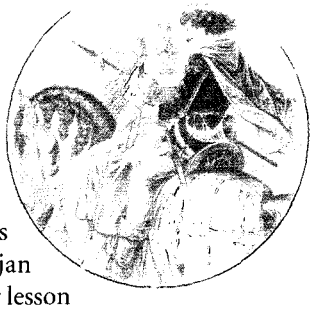
Before someone starts citing statistics about the number of dog bites per year (and the breeds most involved), let me say that, yes, the number of reported dog bites has greatly risen over the last 30 years. My hunch is that feminism is largely responsible. Certainly the increase in dog attacks tracks closely with the decline in stay-at-home moms. Before the industrial era, dogs spent their days in the company of men doing serious work: hunting, fishing, herding, guarding, and hauling. Now imagine today's suburban or apartment dog, utterly without employment or even companionship for most of the day. With both men and women gone from the home, there is no one left to introduce dogs to the world of what Hearne called "our domestic virtues." Children are at least sent to daycare, but dogs are left to their own devices. Is it any wonder they end up as canine delinquents, barking and biting inappropriately? Moreover, it is dogs with the very best instincts who go most seriously wrong. If there were to be another war, the K-9 Corps could be recruited entirely from the ranks of these "bad dogs."

Dogs are sharers in human fortunes and have been since the Mesolithic Era. Whether in times of rising or falling civilization, dogs share not only our lot but also many of our virtues and vices. So long as they remain by our sides, we have the possibility, through the canine mirroring of qualities that humans praise or blame, of recovering the heroic sense. Just as we despise the wretched cur—the very picture of groveling cowardice or deranged viciousness—we naturally admire the noble guardian and guide, the exemplar of faithfulness, courage, and service.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STORIES that



By Ellen Wilson Fielding • **You start out with the essential stories, the ones that reach to the heart of things.**

For my young children, this meant first of all Bible stories—especially those bold bright Old Testament stories like Cain and Abel, Noah and the flood, Moses, David and Goliath, and of course the stories of the Nativity and Calvary in the New Testament.

I judge books for small children on their covers—and on their illustrations. The words I can supply, based on my child's vocabulary and interest level. This was also how I approached the other classic story lines and characters I wanted to pass on to him or her from fairy tales and classical mythology. At first, I worried my children would be puzzled about the differences between the Greek and Roman gods and the God of the Bible, but there was no problem at all. I explained that the myths were stories people made up because they didn't know about the real God, and my kids found this perfectly reasonable. Children usually know what their grown-ups believe to be true and important.

But how heroic were the people in these stories? How good an example of heroic virtue does Jack (of Beanstalk fame) provide, or Jason and the Argonauts, or even Jacob and Esau? There are a lot of knaves and fools in these time-tested stories, but even these characters teach lessons our children may not learn if their diet is restricted only to warm fuzzy books about little suburban children like them.

First, knaves and fools face consequences of heroic proportions. Esau loses his birthright and his place as a patriarch, while Jacob lives in exile for years, getting snookered into working away his prime for dear old Uncle Laban. Lot's wife turns into a pillar of salt, and there's nothing to be done about it. Paris steals Helen and starts a ten-year war. Red Riding Hood ignores her mother's advice and gets her grandma swallowed by a wolf.

Life is lived on a grand scale in these tales. One man's obedience to a call from God leads to his fathering descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. The hapless miller's daughter in "Rumpelstiltskin" becomes a queen but almost loses her child to a wicked dwarf. Hercules performs gargantuan labors in atonement for horrifying crimes.

An enterprising courage and an optimistic spirit characterize the successful heroes: David confidently striding toward the giant Goliath, Jack making repeated trips up the beanstalk to the giant's lair, Theseus setting forth to slay the hideous Minotaur holed up in the Labyrinth. Many of these characters also triumph through cleverness and even trickiness, as Ulysses does in devising the Trojan Horse, but using one's wits is another lesson we should like our children to learn, soon after courage.

And kindness. The best of these stories demonstrate characters caring for the widow and orphan. Many of Grimm's fairy tales feature several sons setting off separately on a quest to gain a treasure or win an inheritance. The arrogant older brothers inevitably cheat or walk over anyone poor or weak in their path, while the underrated youngest son responds to those in need, generously shares whatever he has, and earns valuable help in his quest thereby. (Tales of King Arthur's knights and other old legends also pick up this theme, combining it with lessons on how deceptive appearances can be—in the dangerous regions around Camelot, old hags often turn out to be bewitched, and a beautiful woman may lead you to your doom.)

Clear consequences for one's actions, the value of courage, optimism, ingenuity, and kindness—these are all things we want to convey, preferably in a captivating, non-preachy way, to any child we hope may grow to heroic stature, or at least learn to appreciate the heroes around him.

As my own children grew older, I began to search out stories that would reinforce all those lessons with a similar sense of large destiny and firm consequences. These "read aloud" stories, now read to children beginning to be old enough to read themselves, had to be well-written, too. By popular demand, we went through C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* several times. Lewis's ordinary schoolchildren are challenged to become extraordinary players in the fight of good against evil. Loyalty, generosity, owning up to faults, playing by the rules, performing brave acts even when you don't feel brave, risking unpopularity, telling the truth—all these aids to heroism are presented in the best possible way, through an enchanting artistic vision.

The best pioneering tales also combine excitement with weighty lessons. Despite all the female characters in the *Little House on the Prairie* series, my son loved those books (which lack the syrupy sweetness of the '70s TV show). They are filled with deadly blizzards, encounters with wolves and bears, sickness, tornadoes, prairie fires, and so many agricultural disasters that you wince every time someone mentions how good the wheat crop looks. Without making

Ellen Wilson Fielding is the mother of two boys and two girls.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a big deal about it, the Ingalls family all know that you work hard, carry your own weight, never complain, and keep ready to think fast in emergencies. This is the John Wayne school of heroism.

LIFE IS LIVED ON A GRAND SCALE IN THESE TALES.

Swashbuckling books like *Treasure Island* or *The Three Musketeers* or *Robin Hood* or *King Solomon's Mines* or Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* or, later, Sir Walter Scott and his imitators have much to offer as well. The characters need not—and in these kinds of stories, probably should not—be paragons of virtue, but they must be courageous when it counts, be loyal to friends, benefactors, and country, and be willing to subject themselves to principles even when expediency would pay better.

Traditional parents who aim to provide more than self-absorbed mediocrity for their children will have their own lists of good books for kids—alternatives to Judy Blume and her like. What matters is not tracking down every title on someone else's list, but recognizing the right stuff when you see it, and then getting it into the minds of your children. Homeschooling book catalogues carry many excellent titles, including G.A. Henty's historical fiction, brought back into print, and Jules Verne's books. Used bookstores and older libraries conceal wonderful finds amid the dreck. Many bookstores with large children's sections shelve Caldecott- and Newberry-award-winning books separately, and if you look through these with a little care you can find some non-trendy, beautifully written examples of historical fiction or fantasy.

You may have noticed how many authors implicitly acknowledge the difficulty of presenting heroism in the here and now by setting their heroes in other places and times. Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* series, for example, repeats many of the same lessons of courage, loyalty, self-reliance, and daring to be different in space-time travel. Frances Hodgson Burnett is well known for her *The Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*. But she also wrote a riveting boy's adventure story called *The Lost Prince*, full of patriotic spies, mythical East European kingdoms, hairbreadth escape, and nobility masking itself in the commonplace.

Then there are new, or relatively new, finds, like the recently re-issued books of Hilda van Stockum, who wrote during and after World War II. Though most of her books are enjoyable novels of family life, one—*The Winged Watchman*—is set in occupied Holland during the Second World War. A Dutch boy aids a downed British pilot and attempts to foil a nest of informers who live nearby. This is a powerful story which is not afraid to make its readers share pain as well as suspense and exhilaration.

One day, after we had gone through the *Narnia* stories for the third or fourth time, my son asked, "Aren't there any other books like that?" I decided it was time to try him on Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, which, though not quite "like that," breathes the same air. He was ready for Tolkien's mix of the heroic and the mundane in Middle Earth, where a commonplace hobbit summons up courage he didn't know he possessed and learns to hold his own against dwarves, elves, dragons, and goblins. Next I gingerly tried out *The Lord of the Rings*, not sure whether my son was old enough to appreciate the denser world and higher stakes of this successor to *The Hobbit*. He loved every page of it, including the appendices on the origins of elvish language.

All this is not so much a reading list of "heroic" literature as a touchstone to help parents know how to recognize it. In a haphazard way I looked for stories that were *large*—that opened up a spacious world of ideas, adventures, and opportunities; sparked the imagination; conveyed the sense that life held manifold opportunities, that actions provoked consequences, but second chances and rebirths might turn up at the bend of a road; that courage, perseverance, loyalty, ingenuity, and kindness somehow accord with the laws of the universe, and thus have their own built-in success mechanisms for either the short or the long term.

Success does not always mean glory, monetary gain, or even survival, as the martyred head of the Dutch resistance in *The Winged Watchman* attests. It means something closer to achieving rightness, maturity, the purpose for which we are born. Blood-stirring martyrs' stories bring this point home, as do patriots like Nathan Hale. Though most characters do not achieve that standard of heroism, the ones you remember and admire are usually willing to pay a heavy price for great goods.

The Love of Adventure

The love of adventure is not a temporary savagery to be satisfied, but an essential artistic tendency to be crowned and brought to consummation.... The instinct of day dream and adventure...has been the mother of all great travelers and missionaries and knights errant and the patroness of all the brave.

—G.K. Chesterton, "Books for Boys"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not-so-HEROES

THE MYTHIC SUPERMAN OF YESTERYEAR WAS INVULNERABLE AND HEROIC. TODAY, THE MAN OF STEEL IS ANGST-RIDDEN AND SELF-ABSORBED. IN THE AUGUST 2000 COMIC BOOK *ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN*, OUR HERO MUSES OVER HIS FEELINGS AND BRUISED EGO.

Think Woody Allen in a cape. Or better yet, check out the Weinbergs, dysfunctional teenagers who battle with "self-esteem issues" and an occasional bad guy in the recent comic book series, *Relative Heroes*. Their "powers are their problems."

Whether it's the dark, craggy Batman or the morose Superman—who doesn't so much fly as lumber over his fictional metropolis, holding back tears—superheroes aren't quite so super anymore. Can you feel their pain? "It's not easy for these guys," says Bill Jemas, Marvel Comics president of publishing and new media. "It's hard to fight crime and have a day job."

Yes, they still have special powers and battle criminal elements. But who can fly straight with such emotional baggage? This fall, Spiderman sees a psychologist. And a psychologist will soon arrive in Gotham City, perhaps to better understand Batman's nemesis, the Joker.

As comics become more like soap operas, moral ambiguity is increasingly pronounced, says former DC Comics editor Stuart Moore. It's often hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys. The X-Men, who debuted in the 1960s, once fought monsters and mutants. Now, their mission isn't so clear. In the new X-Men series this November—part of a much-ballyhooed Ultimate Marvel line geared to attract a new generation of readers—Jemas says the X-Men are "like Janet Reno: involved in high-profile, no-win situations."

Industry legend Stan Lee, creator of Spiderman and the Incredible Hulk, makes a similar point. "The stories have gotten a little darker and grimmer, not as light-hearted as they used to be," he tells *TAE*. "There is overlapping of bad guys and good guys."

Who stole Superman? It's hard to find a single villain. It would be simplistic to blame political correctness or typecast the industry as yet another victim of the culture wars. Yes, *Batman* writer Devin Grayson rails against conservatives Jesse Helms and Pat Buchanan. But she also says "the evil forces we live with today are ourselves." Not exactly a conservative sentiment, but it doesn't reek of obsession with "social injustice" or naivete about human nature.

True, some comic books have pushed for gun control, and the tobacco industry is evil incarnate in recent editions of *Superman*. But more than politics is at play. Since Superman and Batman burst onto the scene in the late 1930s, superheroes and comic books have been constantly reinvented, says comic writer Gerard Jones, author of *The Comic Book Heroes: The First History of Modern Comic Books.*

After seeing sales decline in the '50s, the industry rebounded in the early 1960s with a new breed of superheroes created by Stan Lee. Lee wanted more human superheroes, not "characters who didn't need to worry about making a living and dandruff." His Spiderman first captured the imagination of millions of Americans as an angst-ridden high school student who obtained special powers when he put on his costume. "We had to accept the fact that someone could stick to walls and spin webs and worry about grades in school."

Worries, yes; moral ambiguity, no. Self-absorption was literally deadly: Spiderman was so busy showcasing his new powers he didn't notice a burglar who later killed his uncle. He learned his lesson.

In the late 1960s, as everything was "questioned," says author Jones, superheroes' lives became even less black and white. Still, more than politics was at play. The most pronounced changes took place not at the highpoint of left-liberalism in the 1970s, but a decade later, at the height of the Reagan era. The Punisher, who started out as a villain in Spiderman, became a border-line hero (and border-line psycho) a decade later in 1987. Asked one writer, "Was the Punisher a menace or martyr?"

The same question could be asked of Batman. In 1986, Frank Miller created a rather unseemly Batman, fat and cranky, in *Dark Knight Returns*. The series sold big. And as Batman went, so did the other superheroes—until even industry insiders worried their trademark heroes had plunged too far into the dark side. Superman started behaving like a super-vigilante. In a breach of an unwritten code, he killed some bad guys in cold blood, says editor Moore. "People at DC thought, 'This is not Superman. He should not be doing that.' They didn't want Superman to be a killer."

In the early '90s, these "angry heroes" burned themselves out, according to Jones, and the pendulum swung in the other direction. The heroes became a little bit more heroic. But these are still not your father's superheroes. As an alien who tracks

continued on page 37

Contributing writer Evan Gahr is an adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Does RELIGION HINDER Heroism?

ROBERT ROYAL • "What is more harmful than any vice? Active pity for all the failures and all the weak: Christianity." Thus spake Friedrich Nietzsche, the West's most influential modern philosopher, in his 1888 book *The Anti-Christ*.

The refrain has echoed throughout the century since. Media mogul Ted Turner, no philosopher, put the now common notion into a more modern idiom: "Christianity is a religion for losers."

Some of Nietzsche's admirers have tried to rescue the often self-contradictory thinker from his own incoherence and exaggerations by pointing out that his Superman—the extraordinary creature he hoped would appear to save civilization—still retains a certain *noblesse oblige* towards the weak. In this view, Nietzsche was only condemning a mistaken indulgence of mediocrity; he admired, for example, strong Old Testament figures. Yet mercy and compassion are inextricably connected to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and, for that matter, to Allah the All Merciful and the Compassionate Buddha.

No. Nietzsche posed a clear question, and it deserves a clear answer: Are the religions that place high value on humility and compassion—which is virtually all of them—the enemies of excellence and heroism?

The Nazis, drawing on and sometimes distorting Nietzsche, believed so. In his table talk, Hitler argued that it was "decisive for our people whether they have the Judeo-Christian faith and its flabby morality of sympathy, or a strong, heroic faith in god in nature, in god in one's own people, in god in one's own fate, in one's own blood.... One is either a Christian or a German. One can't be both."

Yet religious people within Germany gave evidence that this alleged opposition of humility and compassion to heroism and virtue was quite crudely misconceived. We are familiar with the brave resistance, for example, of the two great Protestant pastors Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Niemöller. If Christian humility and compassion are just timidity and love of mediocrity, then these two death-defying men must have been very poor Christians indeed. And there were thousands of others whose stories still need to become better known because, precisely out of their right understanding of humility and compassion, they boldly opposed false notions of self-esteem and valor, often to the point of death.

One of the most remarkable and stunningly heroic was the German Jesuit Rupert Mayer. Father Mayer was a living refutation of the Nazi claim that the "negative" Christianity of the churches, Catholic and Protestant, with its piety, sense of sin, and self-denial, was incompatible with the strong virtues the Nazis admired. Mayer was early attracted to the religious life in his native Bavaria and was deeply trained in the traditional Christian virtues. He showed what these meant in practice. In World War I, as a chaplain to the German army, he distinguished himself by his fearless movements on battlefronts where he administered the sacraments to the dying and used his body to shield wounded men.

Mayer was mangled so badly during one clash he lost his left leg. Hans Carossa, an eyewitness, was moved to poetry by Mayer's courage and serenity as he lay bleeding: "The man lying there in his own blood maintained, even in the most wretched condition, the air of uncommon superiority over himself.... When people like us died, something not quite settled, not quite finished always remained. But this man floated like a sonata by Bach, conjured out of the darkness in clearly drawn lines and in a state of complete release." Mayer was the first priest to receive Germany's Iron Cross, first class, as well as other medals for valor.

That poise, self-possession, and courage were not merely the result of necessity on the battlefield; they also appeared in his everyday life. As National Socialism began its rise to power in Germany, Mayer, out of commitment to the very humility and compassion the Nazis despised, confronted the brutal movement head on. As a matter of pastoral concern, he made a point of attending political meetings that might affect believers in Germany. He did so not as a political activist but as a legendary, battle-tested priest who felt a responsibility to be a pastor over all dimensions of the life of his flock. When 21 young people of the Catholic Association of Saint Joseph were massacred by marauding Nazi bands, for example, he took to the pulpit counseling a firm response, animated not by revenge—which was the Nazis' spirit—but by Christian love. One of his constant themes: If they feel our love, they will believe what we say.

Corbis/Bettman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christian charity, however, did not prevent him from drawing a firm line against all those then in Germany, Communists and National Socialists most prominently, who were preaching a different gospel. He attended meetings of both groups and offered religious commentary and criticism.

Understanding the threats that Nazi views on nationalism, race, and the Bible presented, Mayer tirelessly and publicly proclaimed that a Christian could not in good conscience be a Nazi. At a German political rally to discuss that question, the pro-Nazi audience became so agitated before Mayer had said more than a few words that he had to be taken out of the room surrounded by bodyguards. His prominence brought him to the attention of the Nazis even before they took power. After they were asked to form a government, Gestapo agents came to his sermons and took notes. Mayer was not the kind of man to be intimidated: He spoke out without the least hesitation, even though friends warned him he was under surveillance.

Given his fame, however, the Nazis had to be careful not to make a martyr of him, which would have sparked a popular uprising in Bavaria. When World War II broke out in 1939, however, the regime arrested Mayer and other potential opponents, ostensibly for political crimes. The Gestapo usually sent priests and ministers to Dachau for some unknown reason; thousands of them from more than a dozen nations died there. Perhaps because Mayer might have had a bad influence among so many like-minded colleagues, he was sent instead to the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen. His head was shaved, and he was forced to follow camp discipline, but even there he was treated with no little respect. Still, he lost so much weight that the prosthesis for his amputated leg no longer fit properly, and this added to the trials of life in a concentration camp.

RELIGIOUS MARTYRDOM OCCURRED ON ALL CONTINENTS IN THE 20TH CENTURY EXCEPT AUSTRALIA & ANTARCTICA.

But the prison camp could not bend Mayer's will in the slightest. He was interrogated about his contacts with various people. He absolutely refused to discuss any of his conversations with anyone because, as a priest, he regarded them as confidential and believed silence about them was necessary for trust in the clergy. His accusers hinted he was in touch with monarchists and other opponents of the Nazi government. Mayer would not even comment on such suggestions, either to confirm or deny them. Frustrated that Mayer's fame prevented them from pressuring him further, his interrogators relented.

The authorities at Sachsenhausen had a problem on their hands. They could not brutalize the rock-hard priest as they did other prisoners. His very presence in the camp set a bad example. In a deal with church officials, they decided to send him to a kind of forced seclusion in the monastery at Ettal, where he would be nominally free, but had to refrain from all public activity. It was a hard thing for Mayer to accept this compromise because he knew that people would be scandalized by his apparent acquiescence. Mayer was determined not to lead anyone astray, even passively. He was ultimately persuaded, however, by the fact that he would cause trouble for the monastery, the Jesuits, and intercessors if he resisted the arrangement they had worked out. Mayer was freed from this uncomfortable situation only when Allied forces liberated the monastery. He immediately returned to his active life, but the imprisonment had taken its toll. He died shortly thereafter in the midst of a sermon. In 1948, when his body was transferred to its current resting place, 35,000 people paid tribute. In 1983, the Vatican beatified him for heroic virtue.

Mayer's story is not a common one because heroic virtue is not common, even among religious people. Some might argue Mayer's case is the exception that proves the Nietzschean/Nazi rule that compassion and humility sap the heroic virtues. But in fact, classical religious traditions teach the need for compassion *and* strict truthfulness, humility *and* unyielding courage in the face of evil. Sadly, many religious people themselves in recent years have overlooked these truths. They have so exclusively emphasized the need to turn the other cheek, to seek dialogue, to be peacemakers, that they have lost sight of other parts of their religious heritage.

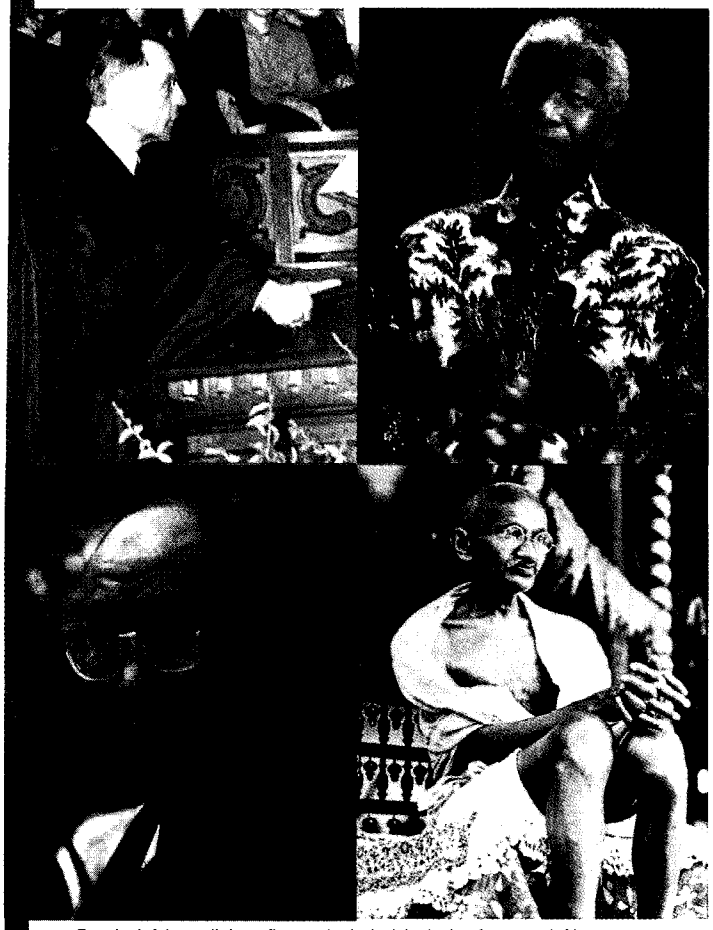
Someone may, for instance, choose to be a pacifist and turn the other cheek to physical assaults. But can an entire society in good conscience fail to protect innocent people from criminal assault within or aggression from without? Considerations like these have led almost all the religious traditions to see the proper carrying out of policing or defense, even when it involves the just use of force, as not mere violence but a noble responsibility.

Similarly, even when force is not used, mere dialogue and a desire for peace may lead to complicity with evil. We have obligations actively to oppose evils like racism, oppression, and slavery. Hundreds of thousands of religious people had no trouble combining the softer traditional virtues of humility, compassion, and self-denial with the harder traditional virtues of truthfulness, firmness, and courage in the twentieth century. We need only think of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (Eastern Orthodox), Natan Sharansky (Jewish), Nelson Mandela (Protestant), Mahatma Gandhi (Hindu), the Dalai Lama (Buddhist), and a host of other distinguished names to realize how thoroughly false is the opposition between these two sets of virtues. Indeed, absent the religious virtues, or their functional equivalent, it is difficult to see what the more martial virtues would be for, other than the self-aggrandizing thuggery that was so woefully common in the century just past.

The virtues only make sense when they are put into the

Robert Royal is president of the Faith and Reason Institute and author of Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Corbis/Bettman

Death-defying religious figures include (clockwise from top left) Nazi-resisting pastor Martin Niemöller, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, and the Dalai Lama.

right relationship with one another. Courage is a good thing, but not in the service of injustice. And people can be wrongly compassionate, as Nietzsche detected, if they are willing to indulge mediocrity and shirk the sometimes difficult obligation of truth-telling. But on the other side, many people have taken ideas like Nietzsche's to mean it is compassionate simply to put the handicapped, the lesser breeds, or the mediocre out of their misery. Out of that seductive lie came the seeming necessity of the Holocaust, eugenics, and "class struggles."

Often enough, the new immoralists were not content with merely killing the opposition, because religious virtues were a standing rebuke to repressive regimes. Therefore, such regimes not only tried to eliminate but also to convert, or at least humiliate, heroic religious figures, particularly in socialist and Communist regimes that had atheist public creeds.

In Rumania, the Communist regime engaged in what may very well have been the worst case of brainwashing in modern times, the Piteşti Experiment. A thousand young people, most of them Rumanian Orthodox chosen precisely because they were serious about their faith, were subjected to severe Pavlovian conditioning to make them reflexively anti-religious. All gave in to the pressure (though some later recovered) after prolonged mistreatment and forced blasphemies too graphic to be described. Even heroic virtue, the totalitarians learned, can often be overcome by the systematic application of ruthless methods.

But not always. In Communist China, Bishop Francis Xavier Ford, a Catholic missionary who had spent over 30 years serving the Chinese, was tortured and brainwashed for 11 months. Fellow prisoners later reported that the mistreatment was so severe that Ford was on the verge of forgetting his own identity and was only able to hang on to it by repeating to himself: "My name is Francis Xavier Ford." In spite of everything, he did not crack. It appears that he died around February 1952. We are not sure because word of his death only leaked out about six months later. He must have persevered to the end, though, because the Communist Chinese would otherwise have made a public spectacle out of his recantation.

Many twentieth-century regimes tried to organize spectacles humiliating to religious people. For example, on November 22, 1927, a man dressed in street clothes was led through a crowd of photographers and politicians on his way to a firing squad in Mexico City. The photographers were present for this illegal execution—there had been no trial or even formal charges—because the Mexican President, Plutarco Elias Calles, the most rabidly anti-Catholic leader in the world at the time, wanted them to record the humiliation of a man desperately pleading for his own life. Calles badly miscalculated. The man walked calmly to the place of his death, asked to be allowed to pray, and then, in a voice neither defiant nor desperate, intoned the words *Viva Cristo Rey! Long Live Christ the King!*

Through photographs distributed worldwide, the Jesuit priest Miguel Augustìn Pro thus became the most famous martyr in Mexico's anti-Catholic revolution early in the twentieth century. But Pro was hardly alone. Thousands of his co-religionists bravely accepted death in resistance to oppression, though few people anywhere, especially in the United States, remember it today.

President Calles was not only wrong about how Pro would die, he was wrong about Mexico as a whole. Though anti-clerical propaganda long tried to portray the Mexican clergy as corrupt, few of them, few enough to count on one hand, renounced their beliefs or caved in to government pressures, even facing death. In fact, many went the extra step of calmly forgiving their executioners before they died.

Their serenity stands in sharp contrast to the savagery of the supposedly progressive forces of the revolutionary Mexican government. President Calles, who admired both the Communists and Hitler, banned Masses, expelled all the Mexican bishops, and ordered massacres of simple believers who continued to frequent churches. The governor of the state of Tabasco, Tomas Garrido Canabal, was so fanatical in his hatred of the Church that he named his children Lenin, Lucifer, and Satan.

Father Pro, then, knew very well what he was risking when, operating underground, he continued saying Mass, hearing confessions, and running Communion stations

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

around Mexico City. Thousands came secretly to the sacraments. By a providential combination of circumstances, he was the perfect man for the job. As a young boy he had always loved plays and practical jokes. His natural talents as an actor and his steady nerves served him well when he had to deceive the police. Pro would dress up as a dapper young man when he spoke with women's groups; the police didn't expect a priest to be so stylish. If he was visiting car mechanics or drivers, he put on overalls. In one case, he was bringing the Blessed Sacrament to a house where plainclothes detectives were waiting outside. Not wishing to give them the satisfaction of stopping him, he boldly pretended to flash an officer's badge. The detectives saluted him sharply as he left the house, mission accomplished, never suspecting the deception.

Like many other martyrs, even in jail Pro ministered heroically to the other prisoners. He led them in prayers and songs and kept up everyone's spirits. The night before he died, he gave his mattress to a sick prisoner while he himself slept on the cell floor.

When Pro's body, along with that of his brother Humberto, who had also been executed, was taken back to his father's house, the elder Pro revealed the kind of family the Jesuit had sprung from. He ordered no one to mourn, because, he said, there was nothing sorrowful in such heroic deaths. Though the Mexican government had forbidden any public demonstrations, 20,000 ordinary Mexicans crowded into the streets outside the Pros' home for the funeral. As the coffins were brought out, someone shouted: "Make way for the martyrs!" The crowd fell silent. But as the coffins were driven through the streets, there were shouts of *Viva Cristo Rey!* everywhere. It was a popular tribute both to religious principle and to human heroism.

In Pro's case, religious heroism was publicly revealed as such. But quieter religious heroism involving resistance and death occurred on every continent in the twentieth century except for Australia and the Antarctic. For the most part, we still have only a sketchy idea of those who resisted and died in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Nazi Germany, the Spanish Civil War, Communist China, North Korea, Vietnam, the various massacres in Africa, and the troubled proxy wars of Latin America. Retrospectives on the twentieth century have been almost uniformly blind to the massive numbers of religious victims—probably numbering in the millions—of various sorts of bloody conflict.

Many of those who died did so as a result of memorable heroism; their religious beliefs would not allow them to compromise with new forms of brutality masquerading as enlightenment. Contradicting Nietzsche, they lived lives of great compassion for the weak and downtrodden, combined with heroic witness to human nobility. Only a few lived to see the victory of the truth. But even those who died were not merely defeated; they kept alive something that deserves to be better known and remains of great value to us all.

No REVERENCE, No HEROES

EDWARD E. ERICSON JR. ° **THE HEROIC VISION OF LIFE AND THE RELIGIOUS VISION ARE RELATED IN WAYS NOT IMMEDIATELY APPARENT TO THE MODERN SECULAR IMAGINATION.**

The heroic Czech dissident and statesman Václav Havel argues that our ancestors, despite their inferior scientific knowledge of the universe, "knew something more essential about it than we do, something that escapes us." What they knew, for all the disagreement over details from one culture to another, was "the same basic message: People should revere God as a phenomenon that transcends them." And as a corollary, they believed "they should revere one another." In that space for reverence the hero resides.

The heroes of old books—Homer's, Sophocle's, Shakespeare's—written before our post-religious age, were certainly not models of perfection. They were not idols, just heroes. They were often tragic figures, with flaws that brought them down. What they had, though, was a height to fall from. Such characters—Odysseus, Oedipus, Macbeth—fascinated our ancestors, who saw in them the potential to go up or down that all people share. They may have been larger than life, but they were not unrelated to life as ordinary people knew it.

A whole vision of communal responsibility and personal significance was embedded within those stories. Old literature taught by example that actions have consequences. Individuals matter. And what they do affects not only themselves but others around them, because individuals have their full identity only in a social context.

Edward E. Ericson Jr., a contributing writer to TAE, *produced an abridged version of* The Gulag Archipelago *in collaboration with author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This vision had norms to distinguish good from evil. It had a place for God, for others, and for the self, a place for this life and the next. It set each human life against a panoramic background that stretched upward to infinity and outward to eternity.

In particular, this vision honored the pursuit of excellence. Human glory could be easily enough forfeited, and the desire for fame, as Milton warned, was "that last infirmity of noble mind." Still, the main thing was that this glory was attainable. The roads to the goal were various. Some wayfarers were impelled by pride toward self-aggrandizement for its own sake. Some humbly assumed the burden of self-denial for the sake of attaining some self-transcending communal end. Some found their measure of glory by coordinating human effort with divine grace in order to glorify God. From the rich stock of fictional and historical characters—Abraham or Achilles, Beowulf or Dr. Faustus, Lincoln or Napoleon—each person could ponder the degrees to which some were worthy of emulation and others provided cautionary tales of a road not to take.

This venerable tradition also provided a means to come to terms with that last great enemy that lay in wait at the end of every road—death. For people who through long centuries lived with heaven above them and eternity beyond, death functioned as the great prompter of the human drama, and every action in one's little story had consequences in the Great Story. In that high-stakes setting, heroism was possible. And a good death was to be prized as a fitting crown to a good life.

WE NO LONGER SET HUMAN LIFE AGAINST A BACKGROUND THAT STRETCHES OUTWARD TO ETERNITY.

This whole grand vision has gone a-glimmering in our age—and only in our age. The literature of our century features antiheroes, one after another in a dull march. We have traded in high King Oedipus for low man Willy Loman. Antiheroic literature is good at provoking melancholy and inducing despair; it does not stir souls to aim at greatness. In a resolutely egalitarian age, the passion to excel smacks of elitism, and elitism is a swear word. We are all small people now. A good death is unthinkable; we surround death with professional white coats to keep it out of view.

Our schools reinforce this low vision. History texts skimp on the great actors upon time's stage: George Washington gets chopped down to half-page size. The old literature is scanted, deemed too difficult or too remote or simply irrelevant. We socialize our children to fit in, not to stand out. We deprive them of models of courage under fire that could inspire daydreams about some dire circumstance in which they could test their own bravery. Is it any wonder that suddenly we're all abuzz about what's wrong with our boys? Even such a seemingly paltry matter as grade inflation undermines the recognition of excellence, for girls as well as boys. The glory has departed.

A touchstone for comprehending our malaise is to be found in a new book by conservative journalist David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There.* Brooks' term "Bobo" is a shortening of *bo*urgeois *bo*hemians. The bohemians who roiled the '60s and the bourgeois who calmed the '80s have, according to this Boomer author, fused to produce a distinctly new hybrid. The Bobos imagine the "culture war that pitted traditional values against liberationist values" to be over, its oppositions now "merged, blurred, and reconciled." Actually, traditional "values" were simply submerged. Out with "soaring ideals and high ambitions"; in with "small-scale morality." Brooks finds "a lot that is wonderful" in this "soft and comfortable synthesis."

Bobo paradise is not, however, without its serpent. Sooner or later, affluent strivers discover a hole in the heart that the material accoutrements of the good life cannot fill. Their first commandment, "Love Thyself," does not serve. So they look—as Havel could have predicted—to religion. But because, in Brooks' words, they desire "to build a house of obligation on a foundation of choice," they require a religiosity "conducted in a spirit of moderation rather than zeal." Thus, "orthodoxy without obedience"—a rabbi in Montana calls it "Flexidoxy"—is the closest they get to the real thing. And because Bobos do not consider that the hole in their hearts might be a God-shaped void, "Montana is the closest we get to heaven."

The insufficiencies of the Bobos' irony-laced approach to life come into focus when Brooks broaches the subject of heroism. It comes, fittingly, in the chapter on "Spiritual Life." For Brooks, too, senses that we get to the heart of the matter about heroes only when a religious vision of life comes into play.

Brooks reflects upon the martyrs, prophets, and saints of yore; then he observes, "Maybe that sort of surrender and heroism is beyond the reach of Bobo spirituality." He explains acutely, "Maybe if we walked around with a coherent moral order built into our head, we would feel at home in the supernatural realm." Since, however, Bobos are "lacking that faith in that next world," even the conservatives among them settle for aiming at "prosaic goodness, not heroic grandeur."

Religious faith was vigorously attacked by secular intellectuals in the so-called Enlightenment. One of their slogans ran, "No God, no master." To that we may add, "No souls." And, "No heroes."

A culture can live off the accrued moral capital of its religious forebears. It can continue to revere heroes after rejecting the religious view of the potential grandeur of beings made in the divine image. But only for a while. We have just about run out of that capital. And that is why we have heroes no more.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOT-SO-SUPER HEROES, continued from page 31

Superman this year comments, "He's not leaping tall buildings...He's just there...I'm not watching a Superhero in action. I see a man...who looks like he's lost everything."

Ironically, the diluted superheroes are intended to attract new readers, particularly teenagers. Yet defining superheroes down has coincided with a loss of readers (admittedly, the Internet and the proliferation of other entertainment outlets for kids are also factors).

TODAY, THE MAN OF STEEL IS ANGST-RIDDEN AND SELF-ABSORBED. THINK WOODY ALLEN IN A CAPE.

In Marvel's heyday in the 1960s, the company sold 300 million comics per year under Stan Lee's leadership, his associate Peter Paul tells *TAE*. Last year, the figure was about 36 million. Marvel dominates the industry along with DC Comics, which would not comment for this article. Overall, sales of mainstream comics are down a reported 40 percent since 1993. Comic book stores are closing in droves. Today, 4,000 remain nationwide, compared to an estimated 10,000 early last decade.

t a recent visit to the Forbidden Planet, a grungy comic store in New York City, nary a pre-pubescent kid was in sight. Instead, hulking twentysomethings and scraggly teenagers pored over the dark titles on display. The Weinbergs were relegated to the basement. The series was discontinued and apparently didn't attract as many new readers as hoped. A few blocks away, Barnes and Noble's flagship store—and much of the country—awaited the latest "Harry Potter" children's book, a far less morally ambiguous tale of a boy and his super powers.

Nevertheless, industry leaders insist that dumbed-down heroes (not their phrase of course) will increase sales. Says Marvel's Jemas, "We want to reflect what's going on in kids' lives with tales of a lonely alienated superhero," someone you can look up to because "he's not bullet proof."

Jemas insists Marvel's new product will resonate with teenagers but remain true to Spiderman's roots. He also hopes the recent movie *X-Men* will increase interest in comic books. Stan Lee, industry fixture since 1938, notes, "When television came along, people said, 'that's the [end of the] industry.' But people will always like comics."

That remains to be seen. For all its genuine creativity and sly wit—comic books are filled with clever *double entendres*, literary jokes, and a touch of irony—perhaps the industry remains a bit short-sighted. It may take quite the powerful superhero to pluck Batman, Superman, and the rest from the quagmire of moral ambiguity and the swamps of political correctness.

PIONEER NETWORK
www.pioneernet.org

Who's developing the next generation of public policy?

You are!

Go to **www.pioneernet.org** to discuss the most important policy issues of the day with scholars, policy experts, journalists, and opinion leaders.

Pioneer Network gives **you** the chance to participate in discussion around leading edge scholarship and help generate original, **market-oriented solutions** to public policy problems.

Twice monthly, Pioneer Network posts a substantive and timely **article of interest** to the virtual community. Additional studies or articles are provided as well to help frame the discussion around a particular topic. Our message board software allows members to engage in a continuing **dialogue** on featured articles, providing a mechanism for improving communication. This also provides members with a valuable **archive of published research** and member contributions that can be accessed at any time.

Pioneer Network also gives members an opportunity to bring policy topics to the table for discussion, publicize upcoming events of interest, search for information, establish new relationships and build a broader **network** beyond their own disciplines and professions.

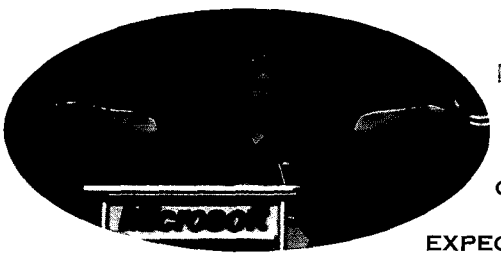
Join now FREE!

www.pioneernet.org

A project of **Pioneer Institute**
www.pioneerinstitute.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Be a MAN, take RISKS, win Money and Honor



HARVEY MANSFIELD • OUR DEMOCRATIC AGE IS LACKING IN HEROISM. A HERO IS SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO, AND LOOKING UP TO OTHERS SMACKS OF ARISTOCRACY, A REGIME IN WHICH YOU ARE EXPECTED TO LOOK UP TO YOUR SUPERIORS.

Or it smacks of fascism, a false democratic version of aristocracy with a "leader" who brings out the worst in the people. But there is a truer democratic heroism which is *manliness*, available to all, or at least to all males.

Until recently, manliness had been beset by criticism from feminists, who declared it undemocratic because it excludes women. But something new is stirring in feminism: Naomi Wolf has been telling Vice President Gore to be an alpha male, and Susan Faludi, in her new book *Stiffed*, sympathizes with working men, who she claims have had their manliness betrayed.

For Wolf to tell a man to be more manly is difficult advice. She might as well tell him to be more intelligent than he is. Manliness is a quality easier to temper than to generate or enhance. If you want to be known as manly, it is better to start out as over-manly. Candidates in the race for the presidency want to "look presidential." They will look presidential if they look manly—calm, confident, and in command. And one can more easily imagine them losing their tempers, as Senator McCain is alleged to do, than trying hard to get angry.

Faludi is the first feminist, so far as I know, to try to understand manliness more or less sympathetically. Other feminists have paid it little attention. Their aim was to include themselves in occupations formerly reserved for men; so they took care not to deny women the more aggressive traits that such occupations seem to reward. Though they insisted the workplace be made more comfortable for women, they assumed it would be easy for men to adjust to the presence of women. The feminists also assumed that manliness could readily be expanded to include women. Their focus, in fact, was not on manliness but on femininity—the "feminine mystique" which they thought men had foisted on women to hinder and oppress them.

Faludi, however, says she wants to know why men are resisting women's independence. (Let's pass over the question of how far they are really resisting.) Her answer absolves feminism of any error. She writes instead about working men in manly manufacturing jobs since World War II who have been "stiffed" by losing their jobs in turbulent times. Either the government or the information economy betrayed them by failing to provide them with the security their manliness desired.

Manliness, Faludi believes, is the desire to be in control; and these men were left without the feeling of being in control. But she understands the desire for control psychologically, as the need to feel in control. Men are supposedly consumed by the need to feel in control; they are not really in control, but rather controlled, one could say, by the "illusion of control." All they have to do, Faludi argues, is let go of the illusion, and they too will be liberated. They will march off gaily into the future hand-in-hand with liberated women.

Since Faludi is offering sympathy to the Archie Bunkers of America's recent past, one is tempted to imitate the rude noise with which Archie would have greeted her analysis. What she says sounds like the liberal philosophy of "Meathead," Archie's son-in-law, the graduate student in sociology. She does not see that, like men, women seek control, but typically not by being in command. Women commonly control their lives by adjusting to a context (as feminist scholar Carol Gilligan shows), and by looking for a niche. Faludi displaces women's desire for security onto men, while denying to both sexes control over their psychological needs and the promptings of others' opinions. Her idea of liberation is hardly more than surrender to the alleged demands of our time.

What Faludi is most blind to in manliness is its embrace of risk. Manly men, like heroes, live for risk. They do not seek protection from risk; they look to it for opportunity. They take charge confidently in circumstances when others hang back. They want honor more than gain; or if they want gain, it is because large gains bring honor. And of course easy, regular gains are less honorable than those arising from unexpected, difficult situations—"turnarounds." Facing risk is trebly individual: The situation is new, if not unique; the solution of manly responsibility cannot be counted on to occur; and the reward goes to a single person, not an organization.

Capitalism, then, is not so hostile to manliness as often claimed. Faludi repeats the frequently heard lament that her subjects have been turned into commercialized images

Harvey Mansfield is Kenan Professor of Government at Harvard.

AP/World Wide Photos

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and thereby lost their manliness. Capitalism, she thinks, transforms manly men from hardy producers into dependable consumers, obedient to incentives and inauthentic to themselves.

This would be true if capitalism were nothing but the calculation of risk and the manipulation of incentives. Now admittedly, the calculation of risk is one fundamental principle of capitalism. A seller naturally wants to remove or lessen the chance his product will not find buyers. Someone in that situation naturally tends to put a smile on his face that he does not really feel. Adam Smith spoke of moral sentiments inducing people to "go along with" their fellows. These are distinct from the self-interest of purely economic calculations, and, as sentiments, a good deal less rational. Your desire for the esteem of others cooperates with your self-interest to make you a more equable person with predictable habits and a tendency to avoid conflict (which, incidentally, is just the unmanly sort that feminists want to produce).

But that is not all there is in capitalism. If it were, capitalism would reduce itself to the socialist-planning idea of controlling risk through an all-powerful bureaucracy—for bureaucracy is the true alternative to manliness. No, the other fundamental capitalist principle is taking a risk when success is unknown and cannot be predicted. This is the manly, entrepreneurial spirit that can never be captured in books or courses on management but only described after the fact in the biographies of individual entrepreneurs. One great economist, whose greatness consisted in being able to see economics as a whole, from the outside, described this spirit. Joseph Schumpeter said that business success is a game of chance, but not pure chance—it is more like poker than roulette. It rewards ability and offers spectacular prizes for a very few, and these are more enticing than the modest, regular gains suggested by the term "profit motive."

CAPITALISM IS NOT SO HOSTILE TO HEROIC MANLINESS AS OFTEN CLAIMED.

Though success is related to ability, it is not simply determined by ability. Thus it appeals more to our sense of honor than to our sense of justice. The prospect of becoming tremendously rich is much more exciting than that of becoming comfortably well-off. It is also more generally appealing than mediocre wealth. Manly men especially have a tendency, again like heroes, to overrate their chances, and will readily decide to "try their luck" against the odds. When they so decide, they work extremely hard and with powerful determination. They have a gambling propensity, but they do not live the feckless lives of gamblers. Capitalism takes advantage of this propensity, which seems so contrary to steady, unambitious gain.

The two capitalist principles of seeking risk and avoiding risk conflict with each other, but they also cooperate. Capitalism is a system for reducing risk that manages also to preserve risk by allowing for new opportunities, new emergencies, and new competitors—in sum, situations calling for manliness.

Andrew Carnegie, risk-taker

Manliness is readily perceived when we use our common sense, but when we try to apply our sciences, it seems to disappear. At the Harvard-Dartmouth football game last fall, Harvard (my team) was running up the score. I expressed my fear to my neighbor that Dartmouth would be hot for revenge next year. He replied, "Oh, no, Harvard will have a greater incentive to do still better. Isn't that how things work?"

Needless to say, my neighbor was an economist. He thought that desire for gain is a stronger motivation than the vindication of honor. The reverse possibility was not open to him because as an economist he cannot admit any factor that cannot be calculated and found more or less probable. Yet when honor is calculated this way, it is translated into gain and becomes an "incentive"—prestige for you if that's what you want, money for me since I know better.

Similarly, as we have seen with Ms. Faludi, our modern psychology loses sight of manliness. When it tries to determine the conditions under which manliness or something like it is present, it turns manliness into a response, and the manly man into a passive subject. The same thing happens in evolutionary biology when its scientists try to study manliness. Evolutionary biology, concerned exclusively with the species, tries to make manly men the servants of the human species. Perhaps they are in some sense, but man is a special species, the species of individuals, the species of honor-seekers in which each of us, and some more than others, wants to make a name for himself. Or herself.

Somehow, the more sophisticated we are, the more difficulty we have in understanding manliness. The greatest social scientist of our century, Max Weber, threw up his hands and called it by a mysterious name, "charisma." That name has the advantage of not being sexist, but it ducks the question of which sex has more of it, or whether there are two kinds of it according to sex.

Men are not going to go away, and neither is manliness. Manliness has not become obsolete even though men no longer live in caves and hunt for game. In the same way, women will not stop being women just because they are having fewer children than they used to have. Yet our ignoring of manliness can have adverse consequences, denying it responsible expression and sending it to extremes of mindless violence, of which we see so much in life and in the media.

I said at the beginning that it doesn't do much good to ask a man to be more manly. Perhaps I was wrong. It may not change a grown man's character, but it might help form the habits of the young. It might also promote a better understanding of capitalism. So let the feminists train their voices, and let the hills resound with their exultant cries, "Be a Man!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the TEACHER as HERO

JOHN RODDEN • IN MORE THAN 15 YEARS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING, I'VE ASKED GRAD STUDENTS WHY THEY DECIDED TO PURSUE ADVANCED STUDY: BECAUSE OF A BRILLIANT ARTICLE IN A PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL? BECAUSE OF A GREAT BOOK? NO. EACH STUDENT INVARIABLY SPEAKS OF AT LEAST ONE TEACHER WHO DRAMATICALLY AND FOREVER CHANGED HIS OR HER LIFE.

And I do too. I mention my own undergraduate teachers, Claude Koch, John Grady, and John Keenan. And my high school English teacher, John Buettler.

We recall exhilarating teachers whose weekly emancipation proclamations roused us from our careerist slumbers, who swept us up in such daring intellectual adventures! For the great teacher liberates the spirit, awakening and enflaming a passion for truth, and a student so touched is never quite the same again. That teacher has stirred some deep, mysterious, half-concealed power within the student's breast, which once unleashed, *does* change the world.

Extravagant language? A utopian flight? No apologies on this one. For if you've witnessed the small daily miracle wrought by a great teacher, you know its beauty and power. By no means are these teachers necessarily intellectuals, or professors, or even classroom teachers at any level. But they are seekers—or better, *finders*—of wisdom. And they are men and women willing to share their finds with the rest of us.

Have you too had the good fortune to have had at least one such transfiguring encounter in your life? I hope so.

Did I, as a boy at La Salle College in Philadelphia in 1976, even have an inkling of the treasure bestowed on me by Claude Koch? Did I ever fathom his countless hours of devotion in preparing our classes, reading my work, talking with me in his cramped, book-lined office on Olney Avenue? He always found time for me, to exhort, to praise, to criticize, to listen.

How many afternoons did I nab him, just as his office hours were officially ending, just as he was about to head home to dinner! He would glance at his watch, sigh with peeved delight, and invite me in "just for a few minutes" (that mysteriously stretched to an hour). I would settle into my familiar spot, and then the unstructured class hour would commence. Koch's highest priority was that young mind before him: Teaching was his mission.

Claude Koch, John Grady, John Keenan, John Buettler: all of them without the doctorate. "I couldn't even be hired today," John Grady once said to me, long after I had graduated, his voice quivering with emotion. He had no illusions about market realities: He was my economics professor at La Salle, and he's probably right about his job prospects today. No Ph.D. = no university job, let alone a tenured position.

Yet without him, my alma mater would be a poorer place—and my own life, and the lives of many other students, would also be immeasurably poorer. For that man possessed wisdom. And he shared it. He wasn't out to convert us students, but he never hesitated to point out the moral and even spiritual implications of economic policies and political decisions. Yes, that man communicated love—a love of students and a love of learning. That love lives on in us, his students. And because it does, everything else that he communicated remains suffused with greater significance.

As I think about the great teachers in my life, their earnest faces, passionate voices, and insistent questions reverberate in my consciousness. These men and women never lost their revolutionary faith that teaching is not just a career but a *calling*.

Each of my most memorable teachers possesses attributes such as critical intelligence, imagination, passion, generosity, and patience. Each maintains a compassionate concern for the student. Each balances a gentle persistence with a spacious understanding that allows students to discover truths for themselves, that exhibits tolerance without permissiveness, that refuses to impose ideologies on developing minds, that sees everything in its ultimate context, that teaches more by example than by precept. And each teacher shows humility in the recognition of how little he knows.

But also: the strength to act on what he does know. What makes these teachers heroic is their daily demonstration that all the lecturing and note-taking and memorizing has value only if it enables you to feel and think more deeply. It has value only if it helps you *to live better*.

And for that to happen, a teacher must engage the whole person by passing on his wisdom, by holding up a way of life

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worth striving for, by enlarging the student's notion of what is humanly possible and how he might pursue it.

Ultimately, what distinguishes the great teachers is what I can only call their unsparing *gift of self*, their capacity for caring about students. Not pseudo-care via maudlin gestures or gushy words. Perhaps even a bracing care, laced with stern affection or bolstered by an impersonal rigor. But their aim is always to awaken students to an awareness of their greater potentials.

My great teachers have been teachers who teach students, not just subject matters; teachers who remember they were once students and know that they still can learn from students. These are teachers who do not succumb to the notion that they are simply dealing with ideas or words or numbers in class; they know that they are dealing with people, and with principles too.

"We sometimes forget that teaching isn't just what one does in that class hour," John Keenan said to me more than a decade after I had sat, wide-eyed, in his freshman English class. Now I was starting out in my own teaching career.

As we spoke together in the La Salle cafeteria, he turned and gazed out the window at the stream of passing students. He reflected on his life as a teacher. Claude Koch had just retired; he himself was nearing it.

Did I even begin to intuit then that he was passing the baton to me?

"Teaching is really related to who one is, as a whole person," he continued. "It is working with students, being there to talk to students. I'm happy teaching in a place where good teaching is valued. La Salle's been a good match for me. But I worry that our reward system is becoming geared to looking out for Number One. I worry that we're sending young faculty the wrong message: 'You should be writing an article or preparing a conference paper, not talking to students.'"

TEACHING HAS VALUE ONLY IF IT HELPS YOU *TO LIVE BETTER.*

He paused. His glance took in the student stream; his tone was gentle yet firm. "Young and old teachers each have a special role to perform with students; the relationship is different. It's important to have some young teachers who are not so concerned with being 'productive scholars' that they can't 'waste' time with students."

He turned and looked me directly in the face. "If you know what you teach, you will also know how much you don't know, and that will make you tolerant of others. If you love what you teach, your students will sense it, and they will take the fire of your enthusiasm and the warmth of your concern with them when they depart. If you are lucky, they will have enough fire and warmth to share them with others. In this way, you may enrich the lives of those you have never met."

John Rodden teaches at the University of Texas at Austin. His latest book is Lionel Trilling and the Critics.

How many times have I walked the grounds of Holy Ghost Prep with my old English teacher, John Buettler? How many times have we passed the graves of all the priests and brothers who have taught with him at the school? On one recent day, the conversation turns to *his* teachers. In the same tones of filial love that John Keenan had spoken about Claude Koch, he speaks about the ghostly presences in his life: Father Frank Meenan, Father Francis Curtin, and others.

John Buettler doesn't append after those names the phrase "He changed my life"—he doesn't need to. It is implicit in everything he says. He has encountered not just a model of the good teacher but of the good man. It is not classroom performance, narrowly defined, that marks the great teacher. It is "teaching" in this broadest sense: teaching as a quality of special presence.

No incident better exemplifies that radiant presence than an act of kindness a young teacher performed at Holy Ghost Prep three decades ago. The beneficiary was a boy whom I once knew very well.

He was a 15-year-old high school sophomore. He had never gone on a date before; in fact, he had never been able to muster the courage to ask a girl for a date. But one evening a girl phoned him. He had met her several times at debating tournaments. She invited him to her school's formal dance, a "soph hop." Overjoyed at first, he then realized the logistical difficulties were formidable. No evening bus was available. His father worked on the night of the dance. His mother didn't drive. He didn't drive yet, nor did the girl—and the dance was 45 miles away. How would he get there and back? The more he thought about it, the more it seemed impossible.

As he explained this sad state of affairs to his teacher, the teacher suddenly interrupted him. "Wait a second! What date is that? Well, I happen to have an invitation to dinner that evening from friends who live near that school."

"What a miracle!" the boy exclaimed. He marveled at how Providence had made everything work out so beautifully.

And so, through that teacher's devious solicitude, Stephanie Leone and I did attend her soph hop together on a halcyon spring evening in 1972. Only years later did I discover that my generous chauffeur had no friends near Archbishop Prendergast High School in Drexel Hill. And that this vibrant 25-year-old teacher had taken his flabbergasted fiancée to a boring movie near the dance hall that evening. And that the movie had let out a full two hours before the dance had ended, after which they had waited patiently in the school parking lot.

That's all there is to the story.

Except to say, publicly for the first time: John Buettler, thank you. For that and for so much more.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My HERO, My FATHER

Mark Jacoby, 1946

JEFF JACOBY • "I WANT TO *DO* SOMETHING WITH MY LIFE," I TOLD MY FATHER. "I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING. WHAT HAVE *YOU* EVER ACCOMPLISHED?" IT WAS AN AWFUL THING TO SAY, CRUEL AND SMUG AND SNOTTY. MY ONLY DEFENSE IS THAT I WAS 14, AND LIKE EVERY ADOLESCENT, THE ONE THING IN THIS WORLD I COULD SEE WITH CRYSTAL CLARITY WAS MY FATHER'S CLAY FEET.

No man is a hero to his valet, the aphorism runs. Perhaps no father is a hero to his adolescent son. But even at 14, I should have known better than to ask what my father had ever accomplished. He had made a good marriage to a good woman, with whom he was raising five children in a home filled with love, laughter, and integrity. Pedestrian achievements? In my father's case, they were nothing short of heroic.

On the day after Passover in 1944, my father and his family were rounded up by the Nazis. Along with other Jewish families from their region of eastern Slovakia, they were transported to a ghetto in the nearby Hungarian city of Satoraljaujhely. For six weeks they were kept in the ghetto, which grew increasingly crowded as more and more Jews were brought in. Then it began to empty, as Jews were taken out.

They left on a Thursday. With only the belongings they could carry by hand, they were marched to the waiting train. As each boxcar filled, its doors were chained and locked. There were no seats inside, no windows, no water. The only toilet was a bucket on the floor.

For three days of suffocation, thirst, and stench, the train moved. When it stopped, David and Leah Jakubovic and their five youngest children—Franceska, Markus, Zoltan, Yrvin, and Alice—were at Auschwitz.

The doors opened. There were blinding floodlights, shouting S.S. guards, snarling dogs. The Jews were forced off the train and onto the platform; men and women were made to line up separately.

"*Raus! Raus!*" they heard. "Out! Out!"

In the noise and confusion, they made their way along the platform at the end of which Dr. Mengele waited, performing the "selection." Some Jews he waved to the right, some to the left. My father, a strong 18-year-old, was sent to the left. His clothes were removed, his head was shaved, and a number (A-10502) was tattooed on his arm. My father's mother and father and his youngest brother and sister went the other way. Later he learned that they had been taken immediately to the gas.

Within a day or two, my father's other brother, Zoltan, was also killed. His sister Franceska lasted a few months longer. Of the seven members of the Jakubovic family who were rounded up by the Germans in the spring of 1944, only one—my father—was still alive in the spring of 1945. By then, he had been through four concentration camps. At the end he was in Ebensee, a satellite of the grim Mauthausen camp near Salzburg, Austria. He was 19 years old, weighed 65 pounds, and was dying of typhus and starvation. When the Allies arrived at Ebensee, my father was nearly a corpse. He would spend the next month in a delirious fever in a field hospital. Later he would learn that he had also contracted a form of tuberculosis.

His trials didn't end with the war. He made his way back to his native village in Slovakia, only to discover that strangers had helped themselves to his family's small house. He struggled to support himself—buying this, selling that, smuggling something else. Making a living would have been a daunting prospect for anyone in war-blighted Eastern Europe in 1945. What must it have been like for a young death camp survivor with no family, no property, and no home?

In 1948, the Communists seized control in Czechoslovakia. My father, desperate not to be trapped again in a totalitarian dictatorship, got out. He managed to procure an American student visa and to raise the price of an ocean crossing. He got off the boat in New York on May 14, 1948—and was robbed on his first night in America. It is almost literally true to say that my father started out in the New World with only the shirt on his back.

He went to work as a manual laborer, nailing window sashes in a carpenter's shop. After a while he tried his hand at sales: mattresses first, then appliances, then furniture. In time

Jeff Jacoby is a columnist for the Boston Globe.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he opened a furniture and appliance store of his own. His visa authorized him to stay in America for no more than one year. He has been here, so far, for 52.

In all my years growing up in my father's house, when money was often very short and luxuries were few, I cannot recall ever hearing him complain about his circumstances. It is as if he decided that, after Auschwitz, no setback or misfortune was worth even a moment's self-pity. Nor can I ever recall hearing him boast—about anything. Perhaps he was never one to blow his own horn. Or perhaps he lost the urge to brag once he saw the utter degradation to which human beings can be reduced.

My father makes a point of giving some money to charity every day. I once asked him, after watching him slip a few dollars to a panhandler who clearly had no good excuse to be scrounging for handouts, why he gave money to somebody so patently undeserving.

"It's not my job to decide if he's deserving," he told me. "A man came up to me with an empty hand. When somebody asks for help and holds out his hand, you don't turn him away."

That was, for him, a long speech. He is not an especially eloquent man and to my knowledge he has never spoken before an audience. He still talks with an accent and sometimes garbles his syntax. But actions speak louder than words, and those who know my father have always known what kind of man he is.

I NEVER RECALL HIM COMPLAINING, OR BOASTING.

His store was never a great success. He is not a born salesman and never learned the art of talking uncertain customers into buying something they weren't sure they wanted. Nor was he much good at leaning on customers who had taken delivery of some furniture or an appliance, but couldn't be bothered to keep up their payments. Nevertheless, he earned a name for himself, as he would learn during the "long, hot summer" of 1968.

When race riots erupted in Cleveland that year, my father's furniture store stood at Ground Zero: St. Clair and 103rd, in the heart of the city's Glenville neighborhood. For days, the area was wracked by pillaging and arson, the violence made worse by the mayor's order for white police officers to stay out. To deter looters, signs reading "Soul Brother" appeared in the windows of black-owned establishments, but there was no such sign in my father's window, and by the time it was safe enough for him to venture back into the city, he expected to find his store reduced to a burnt-out shell.

He found it untouched. The pawn shop next door had been gutted, and the rioters had ransacked the A&P across the street, but Mark's Furniture & Appliance Company hadn't suffered so much as a broken window.

At the height of the riots, my dad later found out, a group of tenants who lived in the apartment units above the store had come down to the street and formed a human chain in front of the entrance. "Stay away from this place," they told the looters. "It belongs to a good man."

Once I asked my father if anything had been uppermost in his mind when he was in the camps. Was there something he always concentrated on, a goal he always kept in mind?

No doubt I was hoping for something lapidary. Something like the exhortation of Simon Dubnov, the renowned Jewish historian, whose last words before being murdered in the Riga ghetto were, *Yiddin, schreibt und farschreibt*—"Jews, write it down, write it all down." Perhaps my father would tell me he tried to remember everything so he could one day bear witness to what he had seen. Perhaps he would say he always looked for ways to sabotage the Nazi operations. Or that he never stopped dreaming of revenge. Or that every morning and night he recited the *Sh'ma*, the Jewish credo: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

This is what my father told me: He was always careful to watch his shoes. He slept at night with his shoes beneath his head, he said, because if you lost your shoes you wouldn't survive for long.

It was hardly the answer I had imagined. I had expected something inspiring, something courageous. Shoes? In the middle of the most evil hell ever created on earth, my father was thinking about his shoes?

But I have come to understand that my father was right. If shoes were essential to his survival—and when you are force-marched from Poland to Austria in the open in January, they are—then shoes were precisely the thing he had to think about. The Jakubovic family, awash in blood, was nearly extinct. My father had to survive. The Jews had to survive. Somehow, despite everything, they had to go on, and if shoes could keep this Jew alive, then nothing was more important than shoes.

Some Holocaust survivors emerged from their ordeal embittered and angry. Some came out cynical and untrusting. Some survivors, furious with God for not stopping the slaughter, turned their backs on faith and became enemies of religion. Some sank into black depression. Some slowly lost their minds.

If my father had done nothing but survive the Holocaust, his life would be worthy of note. That he survived as a decent man and a believing Jew, that he can still laugh and love and look on life's bright side, is nothing less than magnificent.

My father, God willing, will turn 75 this year. He has five children and—so far—15 grandchildren. He keeps the Sabbath and fasts on Yom Kippur and eats matza on Passover. Every morning and every evening, he says the *Sh'ma*. He is a Jew who survived and who survived as a Jew. His life is a continuing defeat for Hitler, who had hoped to rid the world forever of men such as my father. In an age thin in heroes, my father is mine.

What did he ever accomplish? I never again asked such an insulting question.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We've ABANDONED HEROES, but we still Need them.

AP/World Wide Photos

PETER GIBBON ◦ I TRAVEL THE COUNTRY TALKING TO AMERICANS ABOUT THE LOSS OF HEROES. I POINT OUT THAT NEW YORK CITY'S HALL OF FAME FOR GREAT AMERICANS ATTRACTS ONLY A FEW THOUSAND VISITORS A YEAR, WHILE CLEVELAND'S ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME DRAWS OVER ONE MILLION.

I describe a 25-foot stained glass window in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, dedicated in the 1920s to four athletes who exemplified good character and sportsmanship, and I offer a quick list of titles of contemporary books on sports: *Personal Fouls*, on the mistreatment of college athletes; *The Courts of Babylon,* on the venality of the women's professional tennis circuit; and *Public Heroes, Private Felons,* on college athletes who break the law.

I contrast two westerns, *High Noon*, which won four Academy Awards in 1952, and *Unforgiven*, which was voted best picture in 1992. The hero of *High Noon*, Will Kane, is a U.S. marshal. The hero of *Unforgiven* is a reformed killer and alcoholic reduced to pig farming. *High Noon* opens in sunshine in the morning with a wedding; *Unforgiven* opens at night in the rain in a brothel. *High Noon* starts with a kiss, *Unforgiven* with copulation. *High Noon* ends in peace and sunshine with order restored. *Unforgiven* ends as it opens, in the dark and rain, in sorrow and violence with anarchy ascendant.

I remind my audiences that Thomas Jefferson is now thought of as the President with the slave mistress and Mozart as the careless genius who liked to talk dirty. I add that a recent biography of Mother Teresa is called *The Missionary Position.*

When I talk to high school students about their heroes, most have no trouble coming up with local heroes: parents, teachers, peers, people they know. Some cite themselves as heroes. Very few come up with past or present artists, writers, scientists, or Presidents. They do bring up Thomas Jefferson and Christopher Columbus, but they talk about these men in terms of DNA and genocide. Raised on revisionist history, they are cynical about America's past. And some questions are ominous. In Cleveland a boy asks, "Why can't Hannibal Lecter [the cannibal in *Silence of the Lambs*] be a hero?" In suburban Philadelphia a sophomore calls my condemnation of Adolf Hitler "just an opinion." And in San Francisco, a senior tells me, "Heroism is obsolete."

Signs of heroism's decline are all around us. On the New Jersey Turnpike there is a rest stop named after disc jockey Howard Stern, who points out that he now joins the company of other great Americans who have rest stops named after them on the Turnpike: Walt Whitman, James Fenimore Cooper, and Woodrow Wilson.

America's most famous and heroic war photograph shows six haggard Marines jamming an unfurled flag into the rocks of Iwo Jima. Now two historians call it a fraud. At peace, American civilians no longer look up to soldiers, and Memorial Day becomes just another shopping day. Without the draft, many Americans have no firsthand experience of the military. Relying on the media for information, we come to associate soldiers with scandal. Without enduring basic training, we easily dismiss physical hardship and military courage.

We do have a kind of American hero at the turn of the century: the celebrity. We elevate those who are beautiful, rich, powerful, athletic. We worship the famous. In a visual information age, celebrities not only amuse us; they tell us what to think and how to live. In the late 1960s and early '70s, celebrities ceased to be just entertainers. They became spokesmen, enlightening us about war, sex, and drugs, and telling us what was wrong with America. Wavering and confused—after race riots, assassinations, Vietnam, and Watergate—we embraced our celebrities as philosophers.

In America we no longer have heroes in common; instead we share shopping, sports, celebrities. We know who wins Academy Awards, Golden Globe Awards, the Heisman Trophy, and Emmy Awards, but not who wins the Carnegie Hero Medal, the Congressional Medal of Honor, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

How did we lose our heroes? A number of elements in our culture have made us skeptical of heroes: Democratic America suspects superiority. Capitalistic America values

Peter Gibbon is a research associate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is writing a book about the disappearance of heroes in America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

money and comfort more than nobility. Peace-loving America fears soldiers. Celebrity-worshipping America confuses fame with greatness.

But more important is a confluence of new factors that predispose us to scorn heroism. More powerfully, the media create the impression that sleaze is omnipresent, that no one is noble, that nothing is sacred. Related factors include a sexual revolution that fixates attention on the intimate life; celebrity worship that makes us indifferent to significant achievement; athletes who have given up being role models; and a popular culture that is irreverent and sometimes deviant.

Journalists who have become judgmental, historians who are unforgiving, and biographers who are increasingly hostile are additional enemies of heroism. *Time* writer and PBS commentator Roger Rosenblatt notes, "My trade of journalism is sodden these days with practitioners who seem incapable of admiring others or anything." In his memoir, former presidential press secretary Pierre Salinger writes, "No reporter can be famous unless they have brought someone down."

Revisionist historians believe that American exploits and past leaders long venerated are hopelessly flawed. They mock the notion that great events are caused by outstanding individuals. The radical revisionist magnifies the sins and shortcomings of American history; dwells on inequality and conflict; and insists history is driven forward not by heroes, but by geography, chance, and greed. In Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*—widely used in high schools and colleges—the high points of our nation's past are Shays' Rebellion, the Homestead Strike, and the rise of the International Workers of the World. Villains are Christopher Columbus, the Puritans, the Founders, and entrepreneurs.

CELEBRITY-WORSHIPPING AMERICA CONFUSES FAME WITH GREATNESS.

Our biographers have invented a new genre, "pathography," in which subjects are sliced and skewered. Pathography emphasizes the mundane, the neurotic, or the sexual; it offers an outlet for resentment and envy, and permits us to be voyeurs. Pathography forgets the glorious achievement and relishes the flawed life. Pathography likes to focus on Jefferson's love life instead of his writings, his inventions, or the Louisiana Purchase. Albert Einstein's discoveries now belong to his first wife, and Marie Curie is remembered for an affair.

Paradoxically, some factors that make it hard to have heroes seem benign: peace, affluence, and comfort. It is hard to have heroes without crisis, in the absence of suffering. Finally, in a complex, mysterious way, our culture—mocking and irreverent—does not call forth what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature."

Why does an indifference to heroism matter? Because hero is the name given to extraordinary individuals who embody qualities a society finds most admirable. Such people show us the way, energize us, keep us from the darkness. They remind us of how much more we could do, and of how much better we could be. They instruct us in greatness.

By not quitting after the grueling winter at Valley Forge, George Washington teaches us perseverance and endurance. When, after 27 years, Nelson Mandela leaves his South African cell without rancor and invites his guards to his inauguration, we are instructed in magnanimity. When Mother Teresa leaves her comfortable convent school and moves to Calcutta, we learn about compassion. When John McCain spends four years in a North Vietnamese prison and is not broken, we understand valor.

Heroes remind us of our better and braver selves. Shrewdly, George Orwell wrote, "There is one part of you that wants to be a hero or a saint, but another part of you is a little fat man who sees very clearly the advantages of staying alive with a whole skin." When in 1935 Orwell volunteered to fight fascism in Spain, he repudiated comfort and safety.

Heroes, however, are not perfect. They are familiar with doubt and depression. They suffer. They fail. Theodore Roosevelt was not naive. To a friend he wrote, "There is not one among us who does not have the devil in him—it is not having been in the dark house but having left it that counts." Deliberately, Roosevelt made himself optimistic and brave. Millions of Americans emulated their President. Like *High Noon*'s Will Kane, heroes instruct us by transcending suffering and triumphing over weakness.

Heroes don't just offer models and hope. They are fascinating to study. What made Abraham Lincoln rise from poverty and obscurity to become a successful attorney? How did an ambitious lawyer afflicted with doubt and depression become a wise, cunning, and compassionate President? How could he write such memorable prose with no formal education? How did he carry on in the middle of the Civil War when his generals failed and his son died?

After Southerners offered $40,000 for Harriet Tubman's capture, why did she repeatedly return to Maryland to rescue slaves she did not know? What made Sir Thomas More, in love with life and books and conversation, defy his friend Henry VIII and die for the Catholic Church? Why did Jane Addams found Hull House and help the poor instead of going to health spas and succumbing to depression? Why did the villagers of Le Chambon hide Jews from Germans? We should be interested in the mystery of goodness and greatness.

Until World War I, the ethic of heroism was intact and influential in Anglo-American culture. It permeated parlors, schools, farms, and factories. It could be found in novels, newspapers, and eulogies, in McGuffey's Readers and in the sermons of Phillips Brooks, on statues everywhere, in inscriptions on public buildings and engraved on tombstones.

The ideology of heroism informed the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876 and the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. It could be seen in the names parents chose for their children. Nineteenth-century artist Charles Wilson

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Peale named his sons Rembrandt, Ruben, and Titian. Lafayette named his son after George Washington, as did the parents of Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver. After the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, thousands of Americans named their sons Andrew Jackson. After the Crimean War, thousands of British parents named their daughters Florence after Florence Nightingale.

So why heroes? Heroes produce other heroes. Harry Truman was raised on the book *Great Men and Famous Women*. At age 12, Frederick Douglass purchased for 50 cents one of the most popular books in America at the time, *The Columbian Orator*. Reciting aloud stirring speeches by Cicero and William Pitt, Douglass discovered both the power of words and models of courage; he also discovered people who thought slavery evil. Until pioneering suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton met Lucretia Mott, she floundered. Before Dorothea Dix heard William Channing preach, she had little interest in moving the mentally ill from prisons to hospitals. Henry David Thoreau wrote ordinary prose until he met Emerson. George Washington might not have given up his sword and returned to his farm if he had not revered the Roman politician Cato.

On the other hand, without heroes the American past loses meaning. If no one is worthy of admiration, why should we aspire? If courage doesn't exist, why try to be brave? If at bottom we are creatures of appetite and self-interest, why strive to be good? Why be patriotic if America is a failure? If all our heroes are hopelessly flawed, better to stay at home and tend our garden.

In the early part of the twentieth century, popular newscaster and gossip columnist Walter Winchell quipped, "Democracy is where everybody can kick everybody else's ass." In America today we revel in bringing down the great, shun talk of virtue, and unashamedly embrace gossip. We have realized Winchell's dream: Kicking ass has become a national pastime. While our Victorian forebears were perhaps too stuffy and too sentimental, too credulous and too preachy, today the scornful prevail.

I am not suggesting we are like Rome in the fifth century, declining and decadent. I have not forgotten America's economic, social, and scientific achievements. We have an abundance any emperor of China would envy. Many want to come to America, few wish to leave. Nor do I believe the America of *High Noon* and the 1950s was perfect. *Unforgiven* reveals a more complex America: distrustful of gunfighters, suspicious of myths, open about sex, sensitive to victims. But it also reveals a cynical, suspicious America with no one to admire, and a cynical country cannot be great.

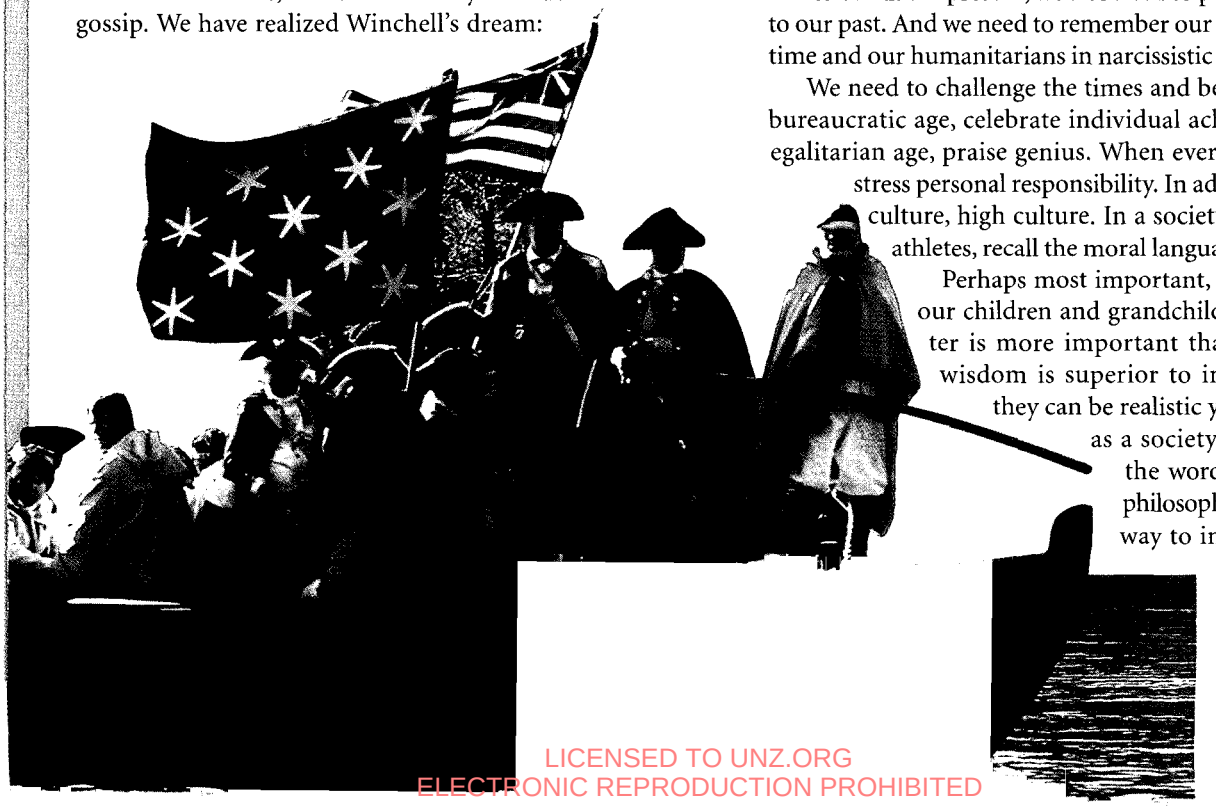
It is easy to blame others: politicians who lie to us and let us down, journalists who obliterate privacy and offer only bad news, an intelligentsia that likes to mock, an entertainment industry that thrives on shock. But we are all complicit. We have created a culture that is cynical, sneering, and leering. We have given free rein to envy, to our desire to tarnish and tear down, and shortchanged our instinct to emulate, to look up, to revere.

What can we do? We need to make the case for heroes, to show how they have transformed America and how they can improve our lives. We need to look back and learn from an age when belief in heroism was intact and imitation of the admirable was the norm. At the same time, we need to live in the present and realize that a more mature society requires a complex presentation of heroism, one that includes a recognition of weaknesses and reversals as well as an appreciation of virtues and triumphs. If we have trouble believing in heroic lives, we can at least honor heroic moments.

We need to recognize that an egalitarian, multicultural society requires that the pantheon of heroes be expanded. Immersed in the present, we also need to pay more attention to our past. And we need to remember our soldiers in peacetime and our humanitarians in narcissistic times.

We need to challenge the times and be combative. In a bureaucratic age, celebrate individual achievement. In an egalitarian age, praise genius. When everyone is a victim, stress personal responsibility. In addition to popular culture, high culture. In a society mesmerized by athletes, recall the moral language of sport.

Perhaps most important, we need to teach our children and grandchildren that character is more important than intellect, that wisdom is superior to information, that they can be realistic yet idealistic. And as a society we might recall the words of the German philosopher Goethe: "The way to insight is through good will."



AP/World Wide Photos

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LIVE, continued from page 15

AMBROSE: Yes. I told him Perot is not going to give that to you, and you don't want to associate yourself with Perot. But I had told Dick in the '80s, "If you ever run for President, I'll take a year off and work for you." I have great admiration for him, but the Reform Party was Perot's party.

TAE: You and Lamm have made noises in the past about launching a third party. Are you still interested in a third party?

AMBROSE: Sure I am. I certainly give emotional support to the Green Party. The cost of running these campaigns has made the two parties prisoners, and then they're so damn predictable. I watched the impeachment proceedings, and even if I didn't know who the congressman was, I knew immediately, as soon as I saw "R" or "D," what they were going to say.

TAE: Were you in favor of the impeachment of Bill Clinton?

AMBROSE: No. I'm not a Democrat or a Republican, but I was not in favor of impeaching him. Impeachment is the single strongest grant of power Congress has. Congress can throw the President out; the President cannot throw Congress out. And to exercise that power takes a lot more than what Clinton did. He lied. I know all of the things he did; everybody does. But that's not enough to throw him out of office.

TAE: Should women soldiers be placed in combat?

AMBROSE: No. Anything but. I don't know about flying airplanes, although I guess I do draw the line even at that. There is the danger of being captured, and then there is the extraordinary danger of what would happen to them if they were prisoners and what their fellow soldiers would do to prevent their being captured or to try to rescue them.

TAE: Is there an unseemly element of self-congratulation creeping into the whole "Greatest Generation" phenomenon?

AMBROSE: I don't think so. We had a wonderful event in New Orleans for the opening of the National D-Day Museum. We had 10,000 veterans there, the largest gathering of veterans since World War II, and every one of them just delighted at the parade. The crowd numbered 250,000 or more, and people were holding up signs saying, "Thank you." They were touched. Many of them were saying, "Gee, I thought this would never happen," but nobody said to me, "It's about time."

TAE: A lot of the "Greatest Generation" pieces are written by journalists who were not in Vietnam and who wish to lionize soldiers but not their contemporaries who served in Vietnam.

AMBROSE: It wasn't the World War II generation that came up with the term "The Greatest Generation." Tom [Brokaw] does get people who say, "What are you talking about? The Founding Fathers were the greatest generation." Tom likes to say, "That's my story, and I'm sticking to it." But it's not the veterans' story.

There are big differences between Vietnam and World War II in the ways that it was fought and the numbers of people who served and what was at stake. Ho Chi Minh wasn't threatening democracy, certainly not in the United States or Western Europe or in Australia. Hitler was. Tojo was. If the Germans and the Japanese had won the Second World War, we would be living in a much different world today, and the men who went out and did what had to be done to save the world from totalitarian rule saved us. So I don't know how you can honor them too much for that.

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE ONLINE

Visit our Web site—which was recently selected for Netscape's "Editor's Choice" Award.

We Offer

- Summaries of recent issues
- Full texts of issues older than six months
- Special columns and reporting exclusive to our Online version
- Practical help with subscriptions, back issues, and letters to the editor

www.TheAmericanEnterprise.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Real Life

FIRST-PERSON AMERICA

SUE THE VICTIM!

By Ray Wisher

As a detective, I'm often asked to provide depositions, but recently I received a subpoena listing a plaintiff and defendant I didn't recognize. I called the attorney and discovered it was a lawsuit filed against the victim of a crime I had investigated. The attorney explained just how the victim had become the defendant, and you can try to follow along, but you might just see a white rabbit running by shouting about how late he is.

The details are these: A young man—a doper—is wandering around a neighborhood one night breaking into cars. He breaks into a truck and finds an unloaded pistol and some ammunition. He steals both, and takes them to a house where a bunch of juvenile lowlifes are hanging out.

In the bedroom, occupied by approximately six people, the kids begin to play with the stolen firearm. They load it and unload it several times. During this felonious horseplay, one dimwit decides it would be funny to play Russian roulette with the gun and his buddy's butt. His buddy is in bed and doesn't want to get up. So this Einstein places the barrel of the pistol against his friend's rear end and demands he get up. Now the kid in the bed, with full knowledge that his friend has stuck a gun in his rear, decides to play along and say no. Remember, this room is full of the new generation of juvenile delinquents, no sense, no discipline, no remorse, no—oh hell, you get the point.

Nobody does or says anything about what is going on. So the guy with the gun pulls the trigger. Nothing happens. He repeats the threat and pulls the trigger again. Again nothing. But like many things in life, the third time is the charm. He pulls the trigger and sends a .357 Magnum hollowpoint through the guy's rear and into his small intestine, destroying his bladder among other sensitive organs.

The whole room vacates. The guy who stole the gun takes a running leap from a second-story window and down the road he goes. The gun is tossed into a canal, and everybody tries to play dumb. In the end another detective takes the statements and makes the arrest of the shooter, who, I might add, was laughing about the situation after his arrest. I arrest the guy who stole the gun. He points out the truck along with the other vehicles he broke into, and I contact the victim. A report is filled out, and the arrest completed. End of story, or so I thought.

When I arrive at the deposition, I am told the parents of the shooting "victim" are suing the owner of the truck. The parents' lawyer is a woman in her mid-fifties. She is a classic leftover from the 1960s, with short gray hair, the mandatory floppy hat, and equally floppy views. The parents are suing the man their son's friend stole from, she explains (and watch out for that bunny), because the truck owner should have had a heightened responsibility for the gun in his vehicle.

I prove to her later that burglaries were almost non-existent in that neighborhood; so how should he have known the threat posed to his property? But my first words to her are "*Shame, shame, shame* on you!" I tell her she is standing on a slippery slope. How much longer would it be before it will be a civil offense if you leave a gun in your house and someone breaks in, takes it, then commits a crime?

She says that's different because vehicles are more insecure. I disagree, "I could break into a house just as easily as I could a vehicle." Then I ask, "How about someone breaking into your house and taking a butcher knife from your drawer? Can I sue because you should have known a knife was a potentially deadly weapon?"

THE ROOM IS FULL OF THE NEW GENERATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS—NO SENSE, NO DISCIPLINE, NO REMORSE.

I get in my speech about the leftover '60s types creating this world we live in, full of irresponsible, remorseless, sleazebag kids and their equally irresponsible parents. I add, "I don't understand—the man is a victim in this!" then I turn to the man's attorney and comment, "now twice." The plaintiff's attorney doesn't understand at first; then she realizes what I'm talking about and yells, "I move to strike"—then she starts laughing.

By the time I finish my deposition the plaintiff's attorney is saying she doesn't think the suit is going anywhere. I retort, "The damage has already been done. The man has to pay for the lawyers defending him."

I could see an almost apologetic light beginning to burn somewhere under that floppy hat. But in the end the lawyers get paid so they can make the payment on their Beemers, and the poor schmo, who didn't do anything wrong except end up on the losing end of a politically correct agenda, is victimized twice.

Ray Wisher, a contributing writer to TAE, *is a Florida detective.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Flashback

TO KNOW NOTHING OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE YOU WERE BORN IS TO REMAIN EVER A CHILD—*Cicero*

A Woman Who Didn't Withhold

The Rotary Club of Los Angeles seems an outrageously staid audience before which to declare a revolution, but the woman who did so, Vivien Kellems, was an outrageous individualist beside whom novelist Ayn Rand looks like an unchurched mouse.

Vivien Kellems was born in Des Moines in 1896 to a Disciples of Christ minister who was working his way through college: "None of this G.I. Bill of Rights paternalism rot for him," she later boasted. Her mother would succeed her father in the pulpit, but as for Vivien, "I suppose in my case shouting about all that stinking, rotten business going on in Washington simply takes the place of shouting at the devil."

Young Vivien, a looker who was not unaware of the fact, became a booker for the West Coast Chautaqua lecture circuit before pursuing a graduate degree in economics. But fate soon had her in its grip, as it were. Her brother Edgar invented the "endless-weave grip" by which cables and wires can be pulled through conduits. Vivien, who "didn't even know there were underground cables; I thought you merely turned the switch and the light came on," sensed profit. Armed with her brother's grips, she waltzed into the offices of New York City's electric utilities, demanding to speak to "the head man," and within weeks secured enough orders to necessitate the building of a factory. She would become president of the Kellems Company; her grips pulled the wires for the Boulder Dam, the George Washington Bridge, and other monuments to Leviathan engineering.

But on February 13, 1948, Vivien almost threw it all away—on principle. Declaring herself heiress to the Founders, Thoreau, and the conductors along the Underground Railroad, she told the Los Angeles Rotarians that the Kellems Company would no longer deduct and pay the federal withholding tax.

Withholding, one of those wartime "emergency" measures that never seems to expire when peace breaks out, was "a monstrous invasion of the rights of a free people," charged Kellems. Its object "was to lull the taxpayer to sleep, to deceive him and make him believe that not he, but someone else was paying the tax." Henceforth, announced Kellems, if "High Tax Harry" Truman wanted her to collect taxes, he must appoint her an Internal Revenue agent, pay her a salary, reimburse her expenses, and give her a badge, too. The Rotarians erupted in thunderous ovation.

For almost the next three years, the Kellems Company paid its workers every last cent they earned. Each quarter, the company supplied registered mail envelopes to its employees, who paid their estimated tax directly to Uncle Sam. Vivien begged the Secretary of the Treasury to arrest her so that the constitutionality of withholding might be tested, but he refused. ("Like all bullies and blood-sucking parasites, those mangy little bureaucrats down in Washington are, at heart, yellow cowards," she said in typically demure language.)

Instead, revenue agents seized almost $8,000 from the Kellems Company's bank account. She eventually won almost a full refund in court, but Vivien never got the chance to challenge withholding's constitutionality. Nor did she convince her countrymen that "the most un-American phrase in our modern vocabulary is 'take-home pay.'"

Nonetheless, Vivien Kellems became a folk hero. Her naughty debutante style—she descended into a Chicago manhole while wearing a mink coat; she flouted the zoning laws of Westport, Connecticut, and when city fathers complained she simply moved her factory—won her mostly affectionate press coverage. Emboldened, she broadened her crusade. Having failed to repeal withholding, she insisted that the Sixteenth Amendment (which permitted the federal income tax) had to go. A *New Yorker* profile called her "the most persistent, articulate, and controversial opponent of the income tax, both state and federal, that the nation has ever known."

She ran for office twice, unsuccessfully, losing to Clare Boothe Luce in 1942 (and musn't that have been a catfight?) and Prescott Bush in 1950. She wrote a feisty account of her legal battle, which she titled *Toil, Taxes and Trouble* (1952).

Perhaps because she made her refusal to withhold so public a matter, Vivien Kellems captured the hearts of America's Rotarians. As the Indianapolis chapter serenaded her,

> Lady, lady, you've bewitched us,
> Lady, lady, just betwixt us,
> We'll follow every precept that you left us,
> But we'd rather follow you.

—Bill Kauffman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hollywood Report

The Return of American Heroes

In 1989, when Ronald Reagan was sitting in the Oval Office giving his farewell address to the nation, he admonished those in his old profession to start celebrating democratic principles and the idea that America was special. The man who was once beating out the likes of John Wayne and Bill Holden for parts said Hollywood needed to tell "why the Pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant."

A decade later it seems as though some filmmakers are finally doing what Reagan wanted.

In 1998, *Saving Private Ryan* gave moviegoers a front-row seat at Omaha Beach. The success of this summer's *The Patriot*, perhaps the best film ever made about the Revolution, will probably ensure similar American history projects down the pike get green-lighted. One, from writer David Franzoni, who penned *Gladiator*, is about George Washington. He wants Robert Redford as the father of the country. And executives at HBO have long been considering a series of films about the founders called "The Patriots," helmed by—seriously—Oliver Stone. The lawn at Monticello as the original grassy knoll? It has potential.

Closest on the radar screen, though, is *Pearl Harbor*, a Disney-backed picture that started filming earlier this summer. It's already generated considerable attention because its $145 million budget makes it the most expensive picture ever out of the gate. That and the eerie pictures taken during location filming of Japanese Zeros flying over Honolulu, which appeared on the front pages of Hawaii's newspapers in May.

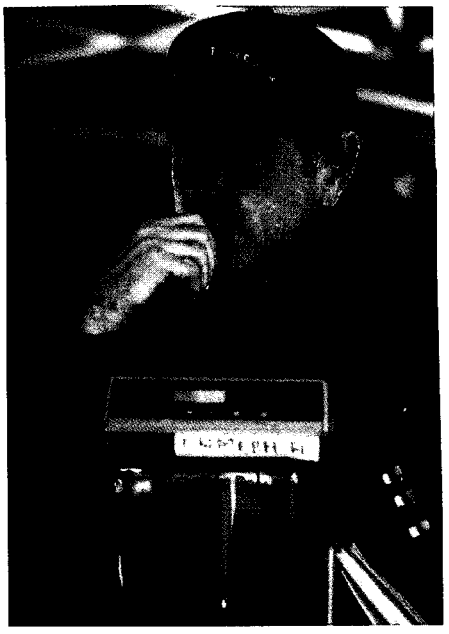
What hasn't received much scrutiny is the story itself, and the man behind it. The writer, Randall Wallace, is mainly known in the industry for 1995's Best Picture, *Braveheart*, and as the filmmaker who landed Leonardo DiCaprio in his first post-*Titanic* outing, *The Man in the Iron Mask*.

What is less known about Wallace is that he's part of a tiny cadre of people in the industry whose driving ambition is more than just crafting films that look good on the big screen and make lots of money. At 51, Wallace seeks out projects about the most important things. He's a Southerner who went to divinity school and isn't bothered by themes about Christianity. *Braveheart* is romantic melodrama, but it's also about what men from Scotland to Concord and Bunker Hill have given their lives for. And *The Man in the Iron Mask* is a tale about faith, devotion, and duty.

Pearl Harbor, scheduled for a Memorial Day 2001 release, is Wallace's attempt to weave together many of these same elements. It's also the first time since 1944, when Spencer Tracy played the part, that audiences will find out who Jimmy Doolittle was and what 30 seconds over Tokyo means. The Gipper would be proud.

Ben Affleck and Josh Hartnett star as fictional characters named Rafe McCawley and Danny Walker, boys from Wallace's home state of Tennessee who grow up to be military pilots for the real-life Colonel Doolittle (Alec Baldwin) in 1941. Rafe's intense romance with a base nurse named Evelyn (Kate Beckinsale) is cut short when he's accepted into the Royal Air Force, which provides the setting for meticulously scripted scenes of the Battle of Britain.

Meanwhile, Danny and Evelyn are transferred to the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Honolulu where, believing the erroneous news that Rafe has perished in air combat, they then fall in love with each other. Truth is, he's been rescued at sea, and eventually ends up in Hawaii to confront the situation of his best friend and lover on the eve of Japan's attack.



Randall Wallace, screenwriter of the upcoming film *Pearl Harbor*

A particular strength of Wallace's script is the historical detail and precision with which he writes about battle, such as the sinking of the *U.S.S. Oklahoma*. Insiders say one reason action director Michael Bay (*Armageddon*) signed on was the prospect of staging scenes even more elaborate than those done by James Cameron in *Titanic*.

Pearl Harbor plays out as Rafe and Danny, two of the best in the Army Air Force, fly in Doolittle's raid over Tokyo. Wallace even chronicles the harrowing experience of pilots taken captive by Japan.

Next in line for Randall Wallace are two especially personal stories. One is about the Seventh Cavalry in Vietnam, based on the book *We Were Soldiers Once...And Young*. The other, set in World War II, is about an American bombardier in a German prison camp who allies with renegade Nazis to ambush the S.S. Wallace told me these are the kinds of stories that make one confront questions about heroism and what exactly is good and evil.

"We're all sinners," he says. "And I do this instead of preach sermons."

—John Meroney

United Artists Pictures ©1998, MGM Distribution Co./All Rights Reserved

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beat the Press

THE HAND THAT RULES THE PRESS...RULES THE COUNTRY—*Judge Learned Hand*

Al Gore's Rough Summer

Have you noticed that the media have been rather hard on Al Gore this summer? *Washington Post* media critic Howard Kurtz notes that the press corps has "consistently portrayed" Bush as "relaxed and confident and Gore as someone who often fails to connect with people."

When Gore's spinner Chris Lehane told the press corps his candidate was still in the process of "reintroducing" himself to voters, an AP reporter demanded, "How long do we have to keep doing this? Why don't people know who Vice President Gore is?"

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd devoted a column to sneering at Gore's meeting with the *Times*' editorial board: "long-winded and belaboring points...eyes began to glaze...says a lot but never says anything." Her reporter colleague Katharine Q. Seelye wrote of the "impression" that Gore "does not take principled stands and instead panders."

Even simple wire service stories tend to harp on old embarrassments for Gore. One from Gannett spoke of "a summer of steps and missteps," "self-inflicted wounds," "turf battles among campaign advisers." It even dredged up the extra water that was released—a year ago—to float Gore's canoe down the Connecticut River.

Newsweek, not exactly known for criticizing Democrats, flogged Gore over 1996 campaign finance irregularities, suggested "he is not a fresh start but an extension of Clinton-era scandal and sleaze," and at one point disregarded its own poll, which showed Gore and Bush in a dead heat, in order to point out "other surveys" that had Gore lagging by as much as 12 points and that also showed "persistent voter doubts about Gore's honesty."

Such attacks would be unremarkable if the target were a Republican presidential candidate, but they raise eyebrows when a Democrat is being skewered. I asked a reporter friend who's covering the presidential election for a major news magazine why he thinks Gore is having such a rough time. Most journalists, he explained, are the sort of "losers who in high school spent every waking hour trying to figure out how they would become editor of the school paper. Consequently, they have an innate hatred of the losers, like Gore, who spent every waking hour trying to figure out how they would become class president."

Now, Bill Clinton was precisely this sort of person, and yet the press wrote about Clinton the way loyal hookers talk about their pimps. But Clinton came from nowhere in 1992. He was infinitely more charming than Gore is, and the press had just spent 12 years covering Republicans generally and the last four covering a particularly boring one. The media are very liberal people after all, and they could only take so much.

But now Gore's been in the public eye for at least eight years, scheming for the top job. Add to the mix the press's vestigial sense of guilt for its obsequious 1992 coverage of Clinton; Bush's charm and his handlers' gift for the long game; and Gore's naked appetite to do, say, or be anything to please a focus group, as well as his campaign's contemptuous treatment of the press, and you've got a candidate with a serious media problem.

The question is, How long can this last? Eventually the press will remember that being tough with Gore might help elect Bush. It's a safe bet the media's school spirit will turn them around as the campaign enters the homestretch.

Already it's clear they're unwilling to take the sort of cheap shots at Gore that they regularly fire at Republicans. Recall how, in 1992, the *New York Times* ran a photo of then-President Bush looking surprised at a supermarket checkout-line scanner. In fact, the scanner was a technological breakthrough because it could read torn labels, and the President (a politician, remember) was politely making a big deal out of it. The media went nuts, saying the picture proved Bush was a let-them-eat-cake aristocrat relaxing in the White House during a (wildly exaggerated) recession. Indeed, Al Gore said, "Here is a man who sees 20-year-old technology at the supermarket checkout line and looks like an ape discovering fire."

Meanwhile, just this summer we learned that Al Gore is, well, a slumlord. A family called the Mayberrys, who subsist on disability payments from Uncle Sam and make *disadvantaged* sound luxurious, write their monthly rent checks to "Al Gore." They live next door to Gore's family estate in Carthage, Tennessee, and have a lot of legitimate complaints about their landlord. Meanwhile, Gore has repeatedly lauded his Carthage farm as the source of his moral sustenance and admonished us that "compassion starts at home."

Yet except for Fox News, this story—though it's not exactly a hard one to tell visually—might as well not exist on TV. Surely this story is better than the Bush scanner story. Even liberal Juan Williams of National Public Radio was disturbed by the media's blindness: "If this had been a Republican, people would be crying 'Slumlord!' That would be the headline, 'slumlord' and 'a man who doesn't take care of little people.'"

The moral of the story: Don't expect media bias to disappear in your lifetime.

—Jonah Goldberg

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITED BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

the Digest

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Everyone Loses in the War over Microsoft

George Bittlingmayer and Thomas Hazlett, "DOS Kapital: Has Antitrust Action Against Microsoft Created Value in the Computer Industry?" in *Journal of Financial Economics* (March 2000), Elsevier Science, P. O. Box 2111, 1000 AE Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

After a judge ruled Microsoft was a monopoly and should be split in two, the value of the company's stock plummeted. But the drop was not unprecedented, observe economists Bittlingmayer of the University of California, Davis, and Hazlett of the American Enterprise Institute.

Bittlingmayer and Hazlett looked at 29 incidents in which a federal agency issued an action against Microsoft. On average, these events caused Microsoft's stock price to fall 1.16 percent over a three-day period, resulting in a typical loss of $3 billion. But another 159 computer companies the authors studied did no better. When an action was issued against Microsoft, these firms lost 0.7 percent of their value over a three-day period, or $5 billion. Companies allied with the government's attack on Microsoft (Apple, Netscape, Novell, Sun) did no better during anti-Microsoft regulatory periods than did companies not involved in the case.

By contrast, whenever a regulatory action *favored* Microsoft, both Microsoft shares and those of its rivals increased in value.

These stock fluctuations, Bittlingmayer and Hazlett conclude, are important evidence that breaking up Microsoft will cause severe damage to the U.S. economy: "The verdicts rendered by the 'courts of investor opinion' constitute reliable economic evidence" that dividing Microsoft is a bad idea.

Break the Lawsuit Habit

Breaking the Litigation Habit: Economic Incentives for Legal Reform. Committee for Economic Development, 477 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022.

About a third of those who sue a corporation for damages receive no money, while those who do receive money often find their award consumed by legal fees. RAND researchers calculate that, on average, a plaintiff injured by a car only receives 52 percent of the total amount awarded; the remainder goes to legal fees. Plaintiffs in a typical product liability case fare worse, receiving only 43 percent of the award, while those who sue the asbestos industry can expect a mere 37 percent.

The Committee for Economic Development (CED) proposes two reforms to lower costs for consumers and businesses by reducing litigation.

Early offers. Under this system, a corporation agrees to pay "all the injured person's economic loss…as it occurs over time." These payments would include wages lost because of the injury, as well as medical care and the costs of rehabilitation. In addition, "reasonable lawyers' fees" would be paid. In return, a plaintiff agrees not to sue.

Plaintiffs receiving "early offers" would thus receive some compensation for an accident. The CED argues this would be better than the current system, in which many victims must wait years to learn they're not getting any money from the courts. Also, under a binding early offer, both sides could freely discuss what injuries took place and what a fair payment would be.

Auto choice. A form of no-fault car insurance, "auto choice" would pay people for the damages caused by car accidents while barring drivers from suing for non-economic damages. According to the Joint Economic Committee, drivers who choose auto choice insurance would see their premiums reduced by 23 percent over more traditional fault-based insurance. If all drivers gave up their right to sue, the committee estimates national auto insurance premiums would fall by a whopping $35.5 billion.

SOCIETY

Doing Bad by Doing Good

Heather Mac Donald, "What Good Is *Pro Bono*?" in *City Journal* (Spring 2000), Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, New York 10017.

The provision of free legal aid that lawyers call *pro bono publico* ("for the good of the public") was originally

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

designed to help poor people obtain legal help they otherwise couldn't afford. But today, reports Manhattan Institute fellow Mac Donald, *pro bono* work "has been the vehicle through which elite corporate lawyers could participate in…the cultural revolution that turned America into a nation of victims."

Legal aid began in the late nineteenth century as a way for white-shoe law firms to help the working poor. Early legal aid lawyers saw themselves as performing charity, not expanding government. As late as the 1950s, an American Bar Association president said allowing the state to provide legal aid was "too dangerous to be permitted to come about in our free America."

But as part of LBJ's War on Poverty, the federal government's Legal Services Corporation was created. Simultaneously, idealists who joined law firms in the 1960s decided to ally themselves with their government counterparts to create "poverty law," which assumed "poor people are victims of systemic injustice that only lawyers could cure."

In the 1970s, Ford Foundation grants helped create "*pro bono* centers" in big law firms. These centers, now institutionalized, place young lawyers with advocacy groups or "public-interest" law firms and help funnel grants from law firms to left-wing groups claiming to represent the poor.

As a result, most of the "big, politically charged cases" of the past few years—from the battle to force The Citadel and the Virginia Military Institute to admit girls to the debates over homosexual marriage—usually had *pro bono* lawyers involved.

And while *pro bono* work doesn't mean a law firm can't make money on a case, it also doesn't mean that the poor are helped. When *pro bono* lawyers suing the government win court costs, the taxpayers foot the bill. A California firm, for example, was awarded $3.25 million for its *pro bono* efforts representing prisoners. In New York City, the firms of Cahill Gordon and Schulte Roth & Zabel teamed up with Children's Rights, an advocacy group, to sue the city into placing its child welfare programs under court control.

The city offered a settlement, but the trial lawyers refused. After four years of litigation, the *pro bono* lawyers settled under terms that meant the city did not have to substantially change its child welfare policies. Cahill Gordon then received $1.6 million (which it donated to Children's Rights); Children's Rights and Schulte Roth hope to receive an additional $9.2 million.

"The problems of the long-term poor cannot be solved by litigation," Mac Donald concludes. "Attorneys would accomplish far more acting as Big Brothers, Big Sisters, scoutmasters, and tutors."

More Cops, More Crime?

John R. Lott, Jr., "Does a Helping Hand Put Others at Risk? Affirmative Action, Police Departments, and Crime," in *Economic Inquiry* (April 2000), Oxford University Press Journals, 2001 Evans Road, Cary, North Carolina 27513.

Rising numbers of urban police departments have been placed under "consent orders" by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), which require them to lower acceptance standards in order to increase the percentage of minorities and women on the force. But as Yale Law School scholar Lott observes, strong evidence shows many crimes increase in cities with mandatory affirmative action policies. "With the exception of manslaughter, aggravated assault, and motor vehicle theft," he writes, "an increase in the percentage of a police force that is black is consistently associated with significant increases in crime."

Lott examined surveys the DOJ conducted of law enforcement agencies with more than 100 officers in 1987, 1990, and 1993, including data from the 19 cities under consent orders. He then compared this survey data with FBI crime statistics.

Lott found no change in crime rates when more female police officers were hired, but "increasing the number of women officers is consistently and significantly related to more assaults on police officers." In general, every 1 percent increase in the number of women in a police force results in a 15-19 percent increase in the number of assaults on the police, because women tend to be weaker than men, and "if a physical attack takes place, it is much more likely to be directed against a female officer."

Lott found strong correlations between a rise in the number of black male officers hired under affirmative action plans and crime rates. He found that for every 1 percent increase in the number of black officers hired under these plans, property crimes increase by 4 percent, murders by 1.9 percent, and violent crime overall by 4.8 percent.

It's possible, Lott suggests, that lowering standards means less qualified people, including less qualified whites, are hired as police. It's also possible that affirmative action programs which promote officers based solely on seniority instead of individual achievement "can affect morale and incentives across all categories of police officers."

"There may be strong moral arguments for affirmative action," Lott concludes, "but crime reduction is not one of them."

OTHER COUNTRIES

The Global Tobacco Wars

Roger Scruton, *WHO, What, and Why? Trans-national Government, Legitimacy, and the World Health Organization*. Institute of Economic Affairs, 2 Lord North Street, London SW1P 3LB, England.

The World Health Organization (WHO) was originally the United Nations' disease-fighting affiliate. But in recent years, WHO bureaucrats have focused on tobacco. They are developing the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, scheduled to be adopted by WHO in 2003 and then be made into law by WHO's member states. Under this convention, tobacco taxes would rise to two-thirds the price of a pack of cigarettes. All tobacco advertising, including sponsorship of sporting events, would be banned. Tobacco vending machines would be destroyed. National governments would have to implement "strict controls on transit, designed to prevent the contraband that is the inevitable consequence of raising excise tax." WHO's president, former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Brundtland, goes further and declares her goal is to outlaw tobacco or only allow

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

smoking under a doctor's prescription.

Scruton finds particularly dangerous a provision of the tobacco control convention which calls for the creation of national commissions in WHO member states. These commissions, to be filled by anti-tobacco activists, would have the power to overrule national legislatures in order to implement WHO tobacco legislation, and would be empowered to supersede national courts to investigate complaints against the tobacco industry and order remedies. "In other words," Scruton writes, a national commission "is not only law-maker and judge, but also policeman."

According to Scruton, WHO "has been politicized…by activists who see it as an unassailable summit of power over national legislatures." Should the WHO tobacco convention be implemented, it might well result in other actions that could lead to unprecedented control of everyday life by international do-gooders. If tobacco regulation is so important that it must be created by unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats, what is there to prevent a WHO convention on alcohol or fatty foods? What is to stop WHO or the U.N. from giving animal rights activists control over animal experiments, or allowing Greenpeace to regulate the environment?

Faced with the prospect of international nannies controlling what we eat, drink, and smoke, "you might reasonably take to smoking 50 cigars a day," Scruton writes. It's far better, he contends, to leave control of these contentious issues to democratically controlled legislatures, not to unelected international mandarins whose decrees cannot be challenged or questioned.

God Makes a Comeback

Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," in *American Sociological Review* (February 2000), American Sociological Association, 1722 N Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Development theorists have argued that as countries get wealthier, they become more secular and less attached to traditional values. Inglehart and Baker of the University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research find this theory only partially true. While the world is becoming more secular, they write, "religious beliefs persist and spiritual concerns, broadly defined, are becoming more widespread in advanced industrial societies."

Inglehart and Baker are affiliated with the World Values Survey, which since 1981 has conducted surveys in 65 countries. While it's true, the article says, that richer countries tend to be more secular, a particular country's morality is "path-dependent" on its religious heritage. Protestant countries tend to be more secular, wealthier, and less religious. Catholic countries tend to be more trusting towards authority, more committed to traditional values, and have more faithful churchgoers. Formerly Communist countries tend to support authority and secularization, although Poland, with its strong Catholic traditions, is more religious than any other ex-Communist country. While 74 percent of Poles attend church regularly, only 8 percent of Russians do.

When it comes to religion, the world is *not* becoming more Americanized. Americans, Inglehart and Baker say, "hold much more traditional values and beliefs than do those in any other equally prosperous society." For example, half of those surveyed in the U.S. rate God as a "10" on a 1-10 scale, a rate comparable with such devoutly Catholic countries as Mexico, Argentina, and Chile. It's more accurate to say that developed nations, except for the U.S., are being more "Scandinavianized," as the Nordic countries are "on the cutting edge of cultural change" on these matters. (Only 8 percent of Swedes, for example, say that God rates a "10" in their lives.)

"We doubt the forces of modernization," Inglehart and Baker conclude, "will produce a homogenous world culture in the foreseeable future."

We welcome submissions of reports, articles, or papers you think should be summarized in THE DIGEST. Please send to P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907.

China Continues to Age

Nicholas Eberstadt, "China's Population Prospects: Problems Ahead," in *Problems of Post-Communism* (January/February 2000), M.E. Sharpe, 2013 G Street N.W. #401, Washington, D.C. 20052.

Eberstadt, of the American Enterprise Institute, believes demography can provide clues to China's future. China, he estimates, will have about 1.4 billion people in 2025, 14 percent more than today. By that time the Census Bureau calculates the average Chinese will live to be 75, and the median age will be 40, up from 27 today.

The Chinese, partly due to their population-control policies, are having fewer children. Demographer Judith Banister estimates the typical family in the provinces has 1.3 children, while in Beijing and Shanghai the birth-rate is less than one child per family. China, with a per capita income one-eighth of Japan's and one-seventh of Germany's, will have to find a way to pay the pensions of a rapidly growing number of senior citizens. Even if it were to grow rapidly richer, "China will still be by far the lowest-income country ever to cope with the sort of old-age burden it faces in 2025."

Moreover, due to sex-selective abortion and female infanticide, China's ratio of boys to girls is high. A typical country will have 107 boys born for every 100 girls. But the Chinese ratio is currently 118 boys per 100 girls. The Census Bureau projects that ratio to stay in effect through 2025. Marrying will become more difficult for men. If two percent of young Chinese women don't marry, this will mean that 1 out of 6 young Chinese men will be lifelong bachelors.

The Chinese journal *Renmin Luntan* predicts that these young bachelors will be forced to be rapists, adulterers, homosexuals, or pursue "weird sexual habits." Eberstadt does not believe the situation to be this dire, but does contend that "the coming bride shortage in China may create extraordinary social strains and tensions."

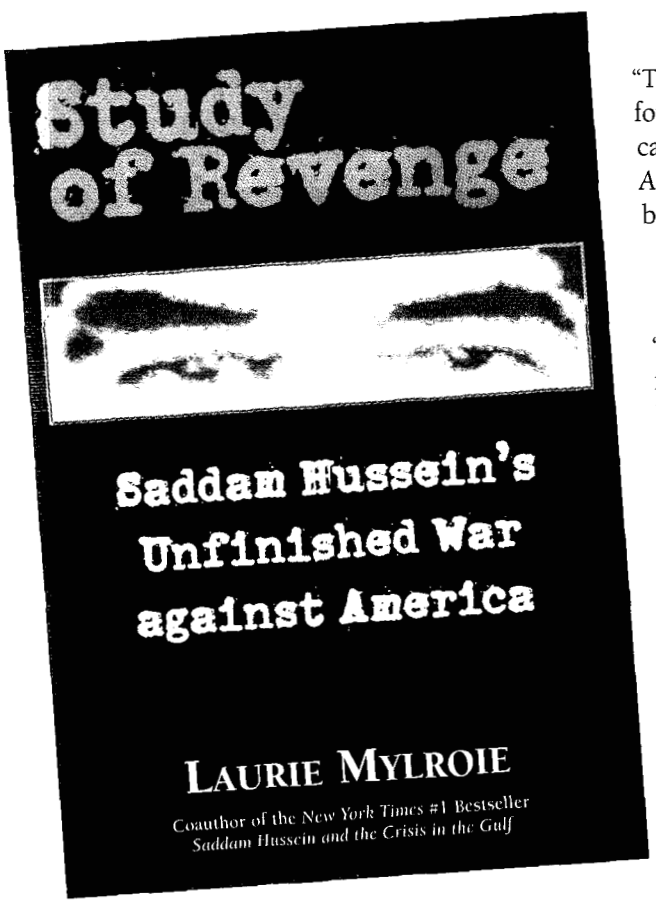
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A real-life thriller from the AEI Press

Available in bookstores September 2000

"Anyone who wishes to continue to deal with Saddam by ignoring his role in international terrorism, by declaring that he's 'in his box,' and by giving only office furniture to the Iraqi resistance now has the staggering task of trying to refute this superb work."

—**R. James Woolsey**, Director of Central Intelligence, 1993–1995



"This splendid and wholly convincing book should form the basis for urgent Senate and House hearings to get to the bottom of the case. Was Saddam Hussein behind the greatest terrorist plot in American history? If Laurie Mylroie is right we will face an even bigger question: What should we do about it?"

—**Richard Perle**, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, 1981–1987

"Laurie Mylroie's provocative and disturbing book argues powerfully that the shadowy mastermind of the 1993 bombing of New York's World Trade Center, Ramzi Yousef, was in fact an agent of Iraqi intelligence."

—**Paul Wolfowitz**, Dean, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University; Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, 1989–1993

"*Study of Revenge* is a fascinating book. Laurie Mylroie understands that what we do not yet know about terrorism, crime, and war may be more important to our security than what we do know."

—**Jeane J. Kirkpatrick**, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, 1981–1985

"*Study of Revenge* is one of the most brilliant pieces of research and scholarship in this area that I have ever read. Mylroie provides analysis that uncovers linkages that I believe the U.S. government investigators failed to notice. . . . The alarms she raises about Saddam Hussein's intentions to generate terrorism in the United States are as well founded as they are alarming."

—**Vincent Cannistraro**, Former Chief of Counterterrorism Operations, CIA

"I regard Mylroie as one of the world-class experts regarding Islam and the World Trade Center bombing, and her book *Study of Revenge* is one of the most comprehensive and best-researched reviews of the bombing investigation."

—**James M. Fox**, Former Director, New York FBI Office

300 pages
ISBN 0-8447-4127-2
$24.95 hardcover

AEI PRESS, Publisher for the American Enterprise Institute
Washington, D.C. 800.937.5557 www.aei.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BookTalk

SO THIS IS LOVE

By Leon Aron

Ravelstein
By Saul Bellow
Viking, 224 pages, $24.95

This memoir of novelist Saul Bellow's friend, the brilliant philosopher and historian of ideas Allan Bloom (of *Closing of the American Mind* fame), is about many things, but mostly—and most memorably—about love. It is love of an almost forgotten variety, that of the Platonic ideal, which is but a subspecies of what we now call, blandly, friendship.

As every man knows, the risks, vulnerabilities, fears, jealousies, and occasional heartbreak inherent in close male friendship—all on display here, delicately and beautifully—often make relations with the opposite sex seem shallow, predictable, and crude by comparison. To the novel's protagonist, Ravelstein, a leading authority on Plato (as was Bloom, author of the classic translation of Plato's *Republic*), "passionate love" was of "perennial interest"; he saw this ecumenical version of love as "possibly the highest blessing of mankind," something that "binds societies together." Ravelstein is unbendingly honest: He means what he says and attempts to live what he teaches. Hence, his relations with his students and, especially, with the narrator, Chick (Bellow), are as intense and spicy as erotic love.

Enlivened by this tension yet unclouded and untaxed by the sexual component, Saul Bellow's tale has plenty of space and energy for another nearly extinct subject of modern literature: that of the unhurried and brotherly frank conversation of two enormously wise, witty, and learned men. *Ravelstein*'s tone is Chopinian; the miraculously sustained mix of intellect and intimacy.

The breathtaking expanse of Ravelstein's interests, the voraciousness of his intellectual appetite, and his quicksilver, at times manic, temperament, so perfectly captured by Bellow, combine to produce a torrent of enormously enjoyable verbal escapades, explorations, revelations, and subversions. Often within the same paragraph, the "raw fun" of scabrous jokes, Catskill humor, and gossip (when Ravelstein did it, he claimed it was no longer gossip but "social history") coexists with the *Iliad*, Shakespeare, Diderot, Rousseau, Keynes, Machiavelli, or Thucydides. Cascading, out pour Lloyd George and Hitler, Roosevelt and Churchill (whom Ravelstein "loved"), de Gaulle (for whom he had "great respect"), Bobby Kennedy, Lincoln, and Caesar ("the greatest man who ever lived within the bounds of time").

> THE DEVOTION OF FRIENDS WAS POWERLESS TO SAVE THE BOOK'S APPEALING AND, TOWARD THE END, QUITE HEROIC PROTAGONIST.

These latter-day dialogues, with Chick a Plato to Ravelstein's Socrates, endow *Ravelstein* with inimitable texture, luxuriantly and intricately marbled like a top-of-the-line steak. (A bon vivant, lover of beautiful things, of illegal Havana cigars and Rossini, Francophile and gourmand, although a chaotic eater, Ravelstein would not have scoffed at the metaphor.) The existential and the "intellectual" are as inseparable in the story as they were in Ravelstein and Chick. The life of the mind is as full of risk and danger and excitement as any physical endeavor.

The richness of the tale is underscored by the precise austerity of the language. Toward the end of their careers, after decades of relentless cleansing, chiseling, and stripping down to the essentials, many great writers bring forth texts like translucent liquid gold captured in Baltic amber. Bellow follows suit. The clarity, grace, delicacy, economy, and weight achieved in *Ravelstein* are unique even by the standards of this Nobel laureate's *oeuvre*.

Among many other things, *Ravelstein* is an epitaph, a passing tribute to the generation of American Jewish intellectuals who should properly be called Russian American or East European American. The beautiful Russian samovar that belonged to Chick's mother was a monument to grandparents and uncles died in pogroms, and cousins, nephews, and nieces tormented and consumed by the Holocaust in Vilno, Kovno, Kiev, Warsaw, Vienna, or Bucharest.

To these there-but-for-the-grace-of-God men, anti-Semitism was immediate and deadly, and anti-Semites—whether past or present, whether in France or Rumania—personal enemies to the bitter end. Chick and Ravelstein return again and again to Céline—a brilliant

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

French writer and notorious and vicious Jew hater.

Whether advisors to Presidents, columnists, or public intellectuals, these men's consuming interest in what Ravelstein called "Great Politics" was fueled by an understanding, in their blood, that making the world safe for democracy meant, first and foremost, de-clawing the beast of anti-Semitism, one of the deadliest products of tyrannies—Left and Right—and of the vulgar passions they whip up and parasitize on.

Seen here greedily swallowing news and gossip from Downing Street and the Kremlin (fed around the clock by former students and admirers from both America and Europe), Ravelstein personifies this fierce engagement with the world, which to him, unlike a vast majority of Americans, was both familiar and dangerous, a minefield of horrible memories. They were fervent American patriots, these men, who saw America, for all its faults, as heaven and miracle, and a cosmic force for the good. As Ravelstein says of Chick, "I see the Jew, the child of immigrants, taking the American premises seriously." The Ravelsteins will be sorely missed in an America that bumbles along, history's most unwilling and inept master of the world, grumbling incessantly about the burden.

One wonders if Chick's knowledge of Russian literature extended beyond Tolstoy, Solzhenitsyn, and Dostoevsky, all of whom enter his conversations with Ravelstein. ("You are always inclined toward the Russians, Chick, when you try to explain what you're really up to," Ravelstein tells his buddy.) He must have known Pasternak, Mandel'shtam, and Brodsky—Russia's best poets of the past century, Jews all, killed or tormented by the regime.

Did he also know Pushkin, Russia's Dante and Shakespeare? Specifically, "Na kholmakh Gruzii" ("On the hills of Georgia"), a short—only two stanzas—masterpiece? The "dark of night" is lying on the hills of Georgia. The poet hears the Aragva River flowing next to him. The poet is sad, but his sadness is not "tormented or troubled." It is "luminous" because it is filled with the unnamed "thee," a friend or a lover. The poet's heart goes on "aching and loving" because it "cannot but love."

Such was the condition of Ravelstein's heart as well. He went on loving—ideas, his students, Rossini at full blast on his super-expensive woofers, Chick, silk ties, gold watches, espresso—but, in the end, love failed to conquer all. The devotion of his many friends was powerless to save the book's enormously appealing and, toward the end, quite heroic protagonist, who dies of AIDS. Yet love (his young wife's) saves Chick, who falls gravely ill shortly after Ravelstein's death.

It is a tie, in the end, between love and death. The inimitable luminous sadness of this book will be with the reader forever.

Leon Aron, director of Russian studies at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life.

THE OWL OF MINERVA AND THE NBC PEACOCK

By Paul A. Cantor

Shows About Nothing: Nihilism and Popular Culture from 'The Exorcist' to 'Seinfeld'
By Thomas S. Hibbs
Spence, 192 pages, $22

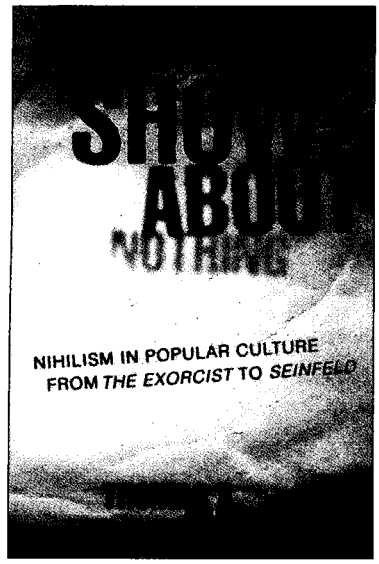
Popular culture has become an equal opportunity target of criticism for the increasing number of academics who write about it. Left-wing critics view movies and television as the tool of corporate America, and condemn them both for creating a consumerist ethos that keeps the products moving off the shelves and for defusing potentially explosive impulses in the general population that might otherwise be channeled into revolutionary activity. Right-wing critics view popular culture as undermining the very American regime left-wing critics think it props up. According to the Right, Hollywood offers up a disorienting menu of alternate lifestyles to the American people, subverting their traditional morality and religion in daily orgies of sex and violence.

Thomas Hibbs is a right-wing critic of popular culture. As his subtitle indicates, he regards popular culture as nihilistic, seducing Americans into a vision of life "beyond good and evil," in Nietzsche's famous phrase. His title refers to TV's most popular situation comedy in the 1990s, "Seinfeld," the self-proclaimed "show about nothing." Plumbing its existential depths, Hibbs even has a section headed "Seinfeld's Dark God." But despite his conservative view of popular culture, Hibbs manages to rise above the partisan heat and smoke of the debate and actually shed light on the subject. Unlike Marxist critics, Hibbs writes about popular culture in terms the ordinary populace can understand. His clear, spare prose is a welcome relief from the turgid, jargon-laden writing one generally finds in left-wing treatises on popular culture.

By the same token, unlike most right-wing critics, Hibbs actually knows something about the subject. He will never be caught in the embarrassing position of William Bennett, who in 1990 criticized "The Simpsons" and then had to admit that he had never seen the show. By contrast, Hibbs discusses episodes of "Seinfeld" even I have not seen, and I watch the show in reruns more or less daily. Still, Hibbs' breadth of knowledge leaves us with a lingering question: If contemporary popular culture is as bad as he says it is, why is he wasting all that time keeping up with the misadventures of Jerry, George, Elaine, and Kramer?

The real value of Hibbs' book lies in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



his thoughtful and detailed readings of individual films and television shows. In discussing popular successes like *Silence of the Lambs* and *Forrest Gump*, Hibbs proves to be a subtle and astute "reader" of film. Though he may condemn a film's moral effect, he can still appreciate its artistry, how well it is put together to achieve its questionable ends. He does a particularly good job of making sense of Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, finding aesthetic order in its abrupt juxtapositions. Perhaps Hibbs' best evidence for his thesis about a moral decline in American popular culture is his systematic comparison of the 1961 movie *Cape Fear* with Martin Scorsese's 1991 remake. Hibbs shows that the earlier film turned precisely on the contrast between the sadistic ex-convict and the decent family he torments, whereas in Scorsese's remake "the disorder in the family anticipates the evil to be wrought by the assailant" and thus the film blurs the line between good and evil.

Occasionally Hibbs even sees a film doing his work for him, analyzing contemporary nihilism and not just reflecting it. For example, he admires Ang Lee's *The Ice Storm*: "While the film immerses the audience in a nihilistic world, it provides us with an awareness, a perspective that the denizens of that world lack." More generally, Hibbs pays popular culture the compliment of taking it seriously, indeed of discussing it in philosophical terms. One may be surprised to see the names of Plato and Aristotle, or Hobbes and Locke, come up in a book on popular culture. But Hibbs shows that movies and television, for all their debased taste, do raise many of the issues that resonate throughout the history of philosophy. In perhaps his most brilliant insight, Hibbs discusses "Seinfeld" as an example of Nietzsche's eternal recurrence, and describes the show as "populated by Nietzsche's last men, who, when faced with the great questions and ultimate issues of life, blink and giggle."

Here one must question why Hibbs fails to give "Seinfeld" a little more credit and consider whether it, like *The Ice Storm*, might be offering a critical perspective on its characters, and not just celebrating their nihilistic lifestyle, as Hibbs implies. He is by no means a humorless man; indeed he shows an appreciation of how genuinely funny "Seinfeld" is. And yet much of his argument seems to involve a fundamental misunderstanding of how comedy functions.

THE WORLD MAY BE GETTING DARKER, BUT THAT MAY BE SPURRING POPULAR CULTURE ON TO NEW HEIGHTS OF SOPHISTICATION.

Generally the comic author does not approve of the behavior of his characters; that is why he makes us laugh at them. If Hibbs were living in fifth-century Athens, would he have complained about the relentless obscenity of Aristophanes' comedies? Would he have warned they were subverting Athenian morals because they show the city falling apart in a chaos of greed and ambition?

To be good, comedy must always have an edge, and the greater the comedy, the edgier it will be. Hibbs seems to forget that good comedy has always seemed subversive to its contemporaries, since the puncturing of pieties is its highest function. That is why so many of the episodes of "Seinfeld" turn on making fun of various forms of political correctness ("not that there's anything wrong with that"). "Seinfeld" became the comedy of the 1990s by viciously satirizing the new pieties of the 1990s. Conservatives should in fact praise the show for having the courage to make fun of liberal sanctimoniousness on such issues as ethnic pride, gay identity, and disability rights.

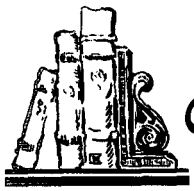
Ultimately, although I basically admire Hibbs's book, I quarrel with its nostalgia for an earlier, supposedly more innocent and moral age of American popular culture. To argue for this point, Hibbs must use highly selective evidence. He celebrates the films of Frank Capra as a positive alternative to the cynical comedy of today, but forgets that in the 1920s and '30s W.C. Fields was serving up comic routines as deeply corrosive and nihilistic as anything produced now.

I cannot accept Hibbs' overly simplified picture of the history of American popular culture. The America that produced "I Love Lucy" is not unambiguously preferable to the America that produced "Seinfeld." "Seinfeld" lacks the moral simplicity of the earlier sit-com, but it does have greater intellectual sophistication—indeed it came as close as any television program ever could to *Waiting for Godot* and stay on the air. As Hibbs himself sometimes recognizes, aesthetic standards do not simply correlate with moral standards. Nihilism has indeed become an endemic problem in modern society, but at least "Seinfeld" found a way to get humor out of it, and, in the process, probably helped us gain a better perspective on how nihilism hollows out the lives of ordinary people.

The world may be getting darker, but that may be spurring popular culture on to new heights of sophistication. Much like Hegel's owl of Minerva, the NBC peacock spreads its tail when dusk is falling. If we are living at the end of history, we can at least have a few last laughs as the shadows fall. To paraphrase Nietzsche at the very end of his *Genealogy of Morals*, I would rather watch shows about nothing than watch nothing.

Paul A. Cantor is professor of English at the University of Virginia. His collection of essays on popular culture, Gilligan Unbound, *will be published in 2001.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Off The Shelf

A REGULAR REVIEW OF CLASSIC, OVERLOOKED, NEWLY RELEVANT, OR OTHERWISE DESERVING OLDER BOOKS

A SUPERFLUOUS CURMUDGEON

By Tracy Lee Simmons

Memoirs of a Superfluous Man
By Albert Jay Nock, 1943

Several years ago a Latin professor of mine pressed me to read an obscure book with a tantalizing title, *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*. As he had never suggested I read anything that couldn't have been perused by a Roman centurion, I gladly agreed. I didn't read too far, though, before it struck me this book might more happily rest on that centurion's table than on the lap of a modern like me.

Albert Jay Nock (1870-1945) speaks from a more brusque, starched-collared world; he is less anxious to please and more eager to get at the truth, whatever the cost to comforts and prejudices. With difficulty do we realize that such a man once lived and breathed in a country espousing an all-embracing democratic ideal where all are deemed equal. Even some of the more stout among us squirm at the candor with which he identifies the foolish and unwashed by name. Surely few men have ever been so naturally natives of another time, few men so inoculated against the shrill and insistent voice of modernity. This is not so much a chronicle of past achievements and struggles as a set of shots over the bows for generations to come.

Nock was a journalist *par excellence*, though he would have welcomed neither the praise nor the designation; he loathed the news of the day. Where he has not been completely forgotten, he's thought of now as an acerbic commentator on things political and economic, a lay libertarian philosopher—and respectful religious skeptic—whose arsenal of intellectual firepower any opponent underestimated to his grief. Yet he served as editor for *American Magazine* and the *Freeman* in the latter's days of glory in the 1920s, writing splendid editorials and articles. He also authored almost 20 books, among them uncompromising studies of political theory and formidable volumes on Thomas Jefferson and Rabelais.

Nock lived by his pen, and lots of ink was spilled for thoughts we wouldn't see caressed on "Oprah" today. He's a writer for whom his apologists must now apologize. Nock spoke his mind, certainly—but then he had a mind to speak.

Take education. Later on in life Nock made a point of sticking it to the disciples of pragmatist John Dewey for the multiple sins they were committing against good sense and intellectual decorum with their rash experimentation with the American mind. For he developed early on "a fairly explicit understanding of the fact that ignorance exists," and that it was the proper job of the would-be educated man to eradicate that ignorance—on his own initiative. Nock was a believer in "the grand old fortifying classical curriculum," not so much because it bestowed automatic brilliance upon those who had suffered it, but because it eliminated the need to take seriously the false, the shallow, and the showy in the public square; it was a device for dismissing the stupid. He was nothing if not trenchant, and as an old man—when he wrote these ruminations and reminiscences—he had lost all patience with the defenders of laxity in the classroom.

The chapter in *Memoirs* that most loudly trumpets the old schooling is the one devoted to his years as an undergraduate in the 1880s and '90s. His had been a small liberal arts college that he knew, in the new world aborning, would strain credulity. "The college I attended is worth a good many words, but I doubt that the tongues of men or of angels could convince the modern American mind that such an institution actually existed short of the Jurassic period, if then." Why? Because perfect respect reigned among faculty and students, and confidence in their rigorous, corporate aims sat secure. "In all my four years there," Nock wrote tellingly, "I never heard of any one getting a word of commendation for a piece of good work, though I saw a great deal of good work...being done." Good work was both expected and assumed to be its own reward. Affirmation, as an obligatory petting tool, had yet to find its smarmy way into teachers' hands.

Nock was an anti-modern—a devotee to stodgy superfluity—in other ways, too. He was manic in his pursuit of privacy, one of the most precious accoutrements to the civilized life he saw already endangered many decades ago. Never giving out his home address, Nock was the butt of friendly jokes that the only way to get in touch with him was to lodge a note under a particular rock in Central Park. And he was of a vanishing breed of another kind: He wasn't only a thinker, but a writer, even a stylist. Paul Palmer, who considered him the greatest stylist of his day, once confided that "no American ever wrote a more powerful prose."

Memoirs, besides affording a leisurely introduction to the life and ideas of a man who proudly held that the "last refuge of individuality is the rock of prejudice," also bears reading by all who harbor certain lingering doubts that their age has gone yawingly astray, but haven't the wherewithal to see how or why. Nock himself might have disputed even this modest judgment, though. Living just long enough to see the surprising commercial success of the book, he began to doubt its value. Nothing that popular could be good.

Tracy Lee Simmons is director of the Dow journalism program at Hillsdale College.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

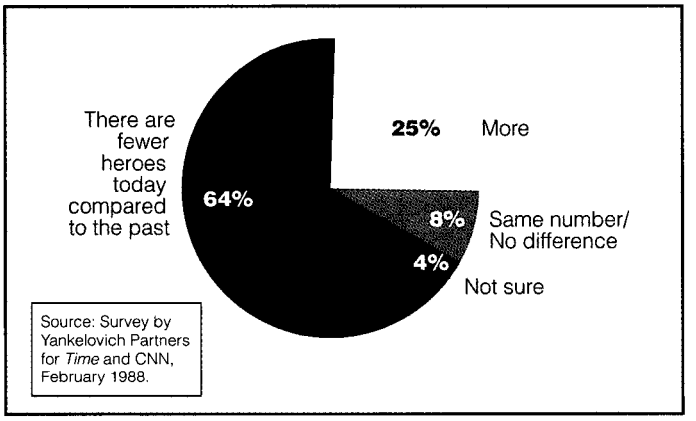
Opinion Pulse

EDITED BY KARLYN BOWMAN

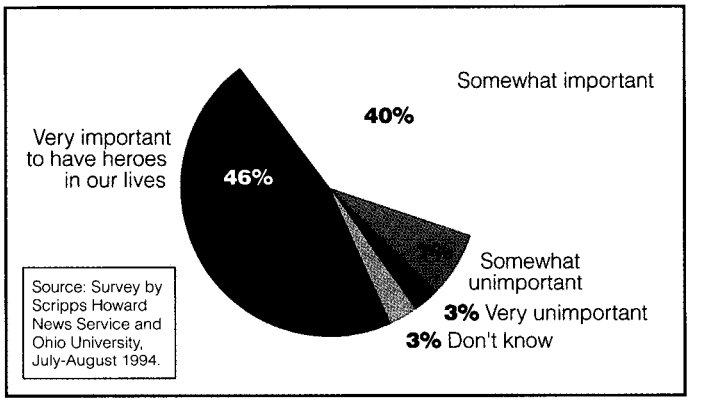
Vanishing Heroes?

Nearly two-thirds say there are fewer heroes than in the past, and a majority say most of their heroes are historical figures. When asked a few years ago what one person or group came to mind as deserving the accolade, the top response was *no one in particular*. The courage and bravery we associate with heroism in military conflicts still resonates among Americans; today, however, in the absence of hot or cold wars touching us, firefighters, doctors, and the police embody those characteristics.

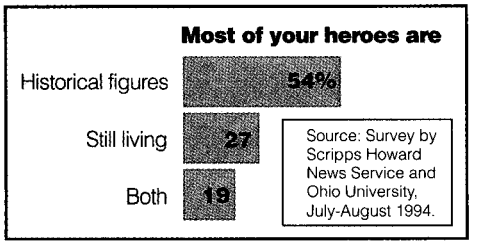
Question: Do you think...?



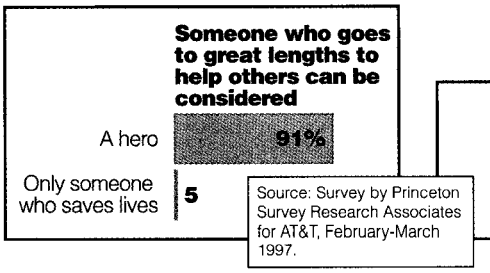
Question: How important do you think it is for our character development to have heroes in our lives. Is it...?



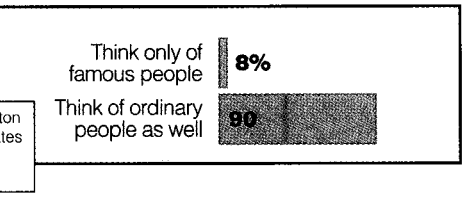
Question: In general, would you say...?



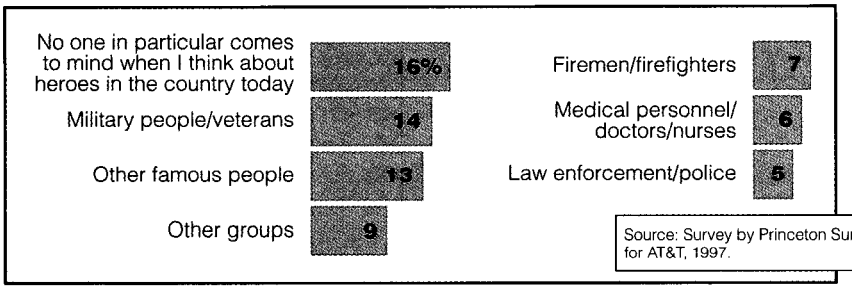
Question: Do you think...?



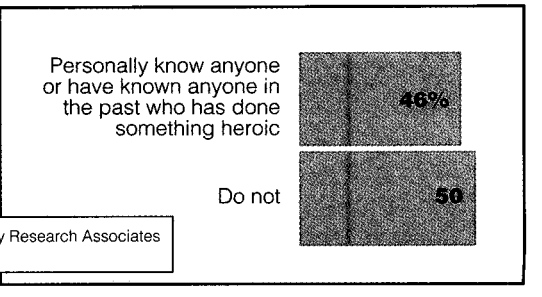
Question: When you think of people who deserve to be called heroes, do you...?



Question: I'd like you to think about American men and women who deserve to be called heroes, because of things they've done or the way they live their lives. What one person, group of people or occupation...?



Question: Do you...?

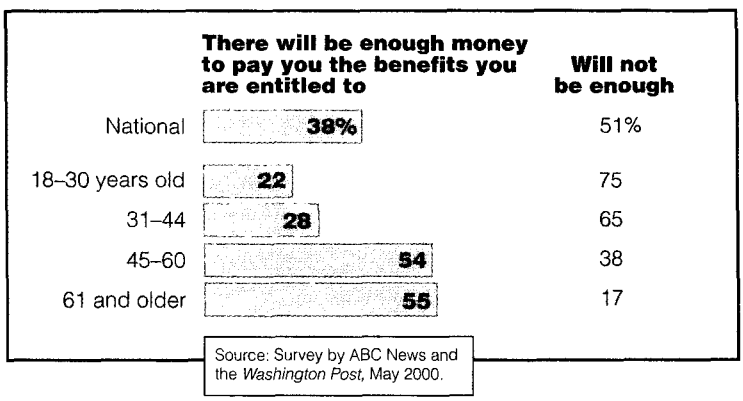


LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Social Security: Time for a Change

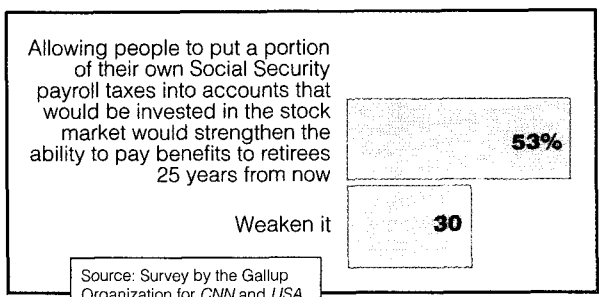
Doubts about the Social Security system are now widespread. A solid majority believes that introducing individual investment accounts will strengthen the system. Americans are opposed to having government invest some of the Social Security trust fund in the stock market, but they are more enthusiastic about individuals investing a portion of their Social Security taxes on their own. If individuals lose money on these investments, most people say they don't want the federal government to come to the rescue.

Question: What do you think of the nation's Social Security system? Do you think that by the time you retire...?



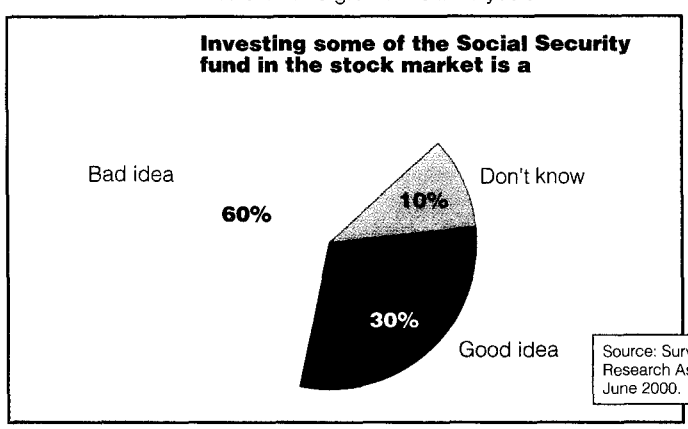
Source: Survey by ABC News and the *Washington Post*, May 2000.

Question: Thinking about the long-term condition of the Social Security system...?



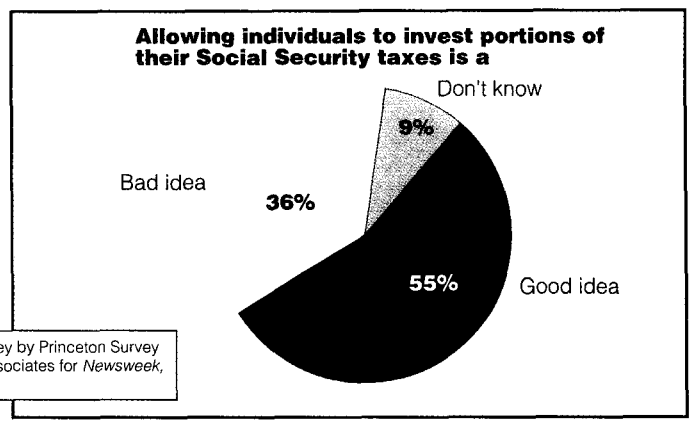
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *CNN* and *USA Today*, June 2000.

Question: Some people have suggested investing some of the Social Security trust fund in the stock market, which might make more money for the fund, but would involve greater risk. Do you think...?

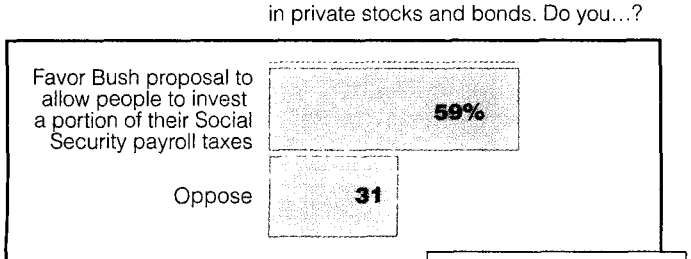


Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*, June 2000.

Question: Some people have suggested allowing individuals to invest portions of their Social Security taxes on their own, which might allow them to make more money for their retirement, but would involve greater risk. Do you think...?

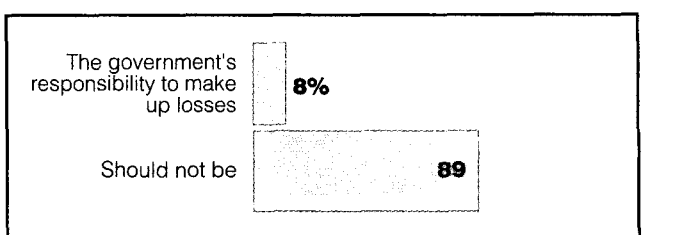


Question: George W. Bush has made a proposal that would allow people to put a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes into personal retirement accounts that would be invested in private stocks and bonds. Do you...?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for CNN and *USA Today*, June 2000.

Question: If people who chose to invest their Social Security taxes in the stock market lose their money, should it be...?



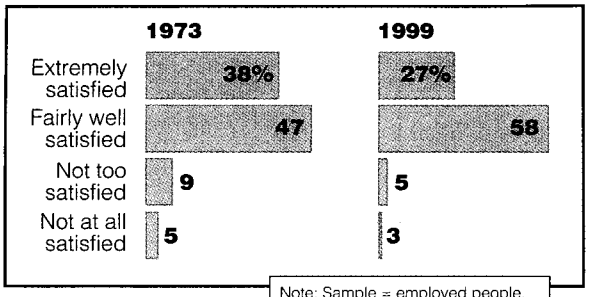
Source: Survey by CBS News and the *New York Times*, May 2000

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How's Work?

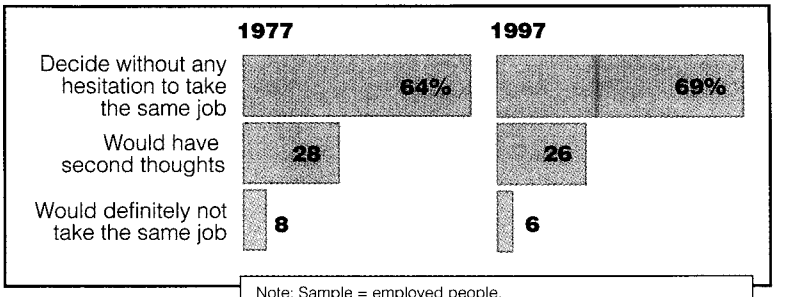
More than 80 percent of American workers are satisfied with their jobs, although the number who are *extremely* satisfied is down from a quarter-century ago. Surveys taken in 1977 and 1997 show that roughly two-thirds would *decide without any hesitation* to take the job they now have if they had to do it over again. Most people are proud to work for their firm and committed to their companies. Nearly seven in ten say they were fairly compensated in the past year. Relations with coworkers are the high point of the work day, stress the low point.

Question: Everything considered—the satisfaction you get from the work you do, what it pays, etc.—how satisfied are you?



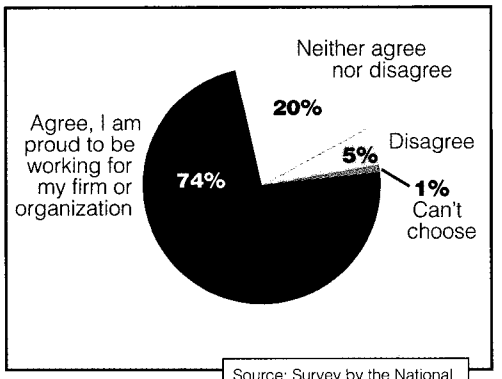
Note: Sample = employed people.
Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide, latest that of April 1999.

Question: Knowing what you know now, if you had to decide all over again whether to take the job you now have, what would you decide...?



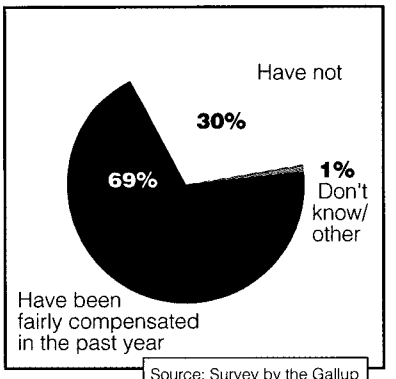
Note: Sample = employed people.
Source: Survey Research Center, Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan, 1977; Louis Harris and Associates, with a questionnaire developed by the Families and Work Institutes, 1997.

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements...?



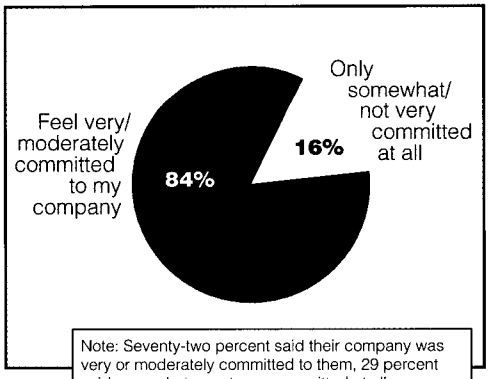
Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, 1998.

Question: From your most objective viewpoint...?



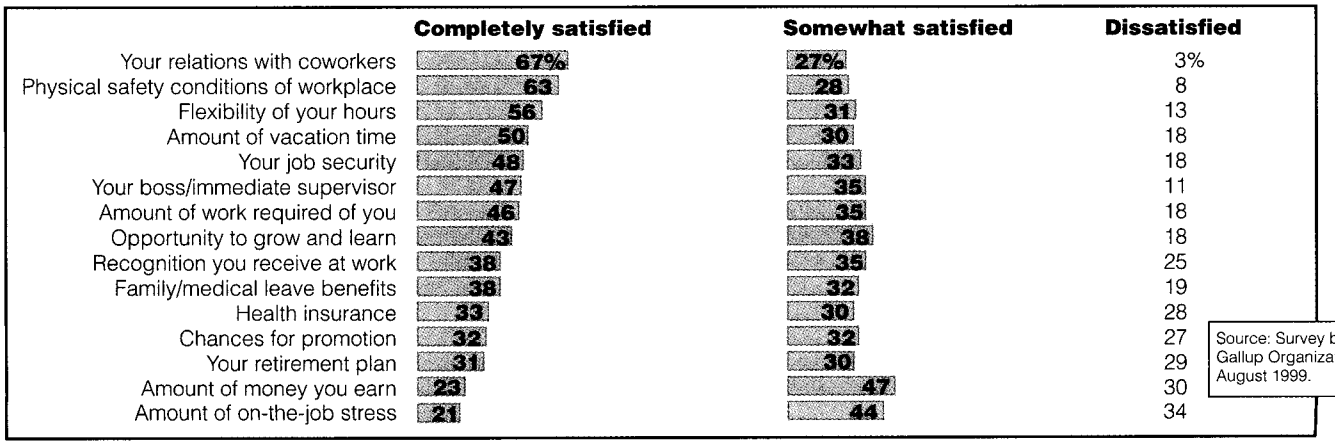
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Inc.*, 1997.

Question: Overall, how...?



Note: Seventy-two percent said their company was very or moderately committed to them, 29 percent said somewhat or not very committed at all.
Source: Survey by Wirthlin Worldwide, October 1998.

Question: Now I'll read a list of job characteristics. For each, please tell me how...



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 1999.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Mail

Robert Sterling's article "What Are America's Best Business Schools?" (July/August) is wrong-headed. True, graduates of the service academies are often top leaders in business, and attending a service academy is not a bad thing. But it is wrong to attribute these leaders' success to the academies. Instead, their business accomplishments can be explained by two variables. First, many are exceptional young men and women to begin with. People of high ability tend to be successful regardless of where they go to college. Plus, the service academies do a good job of weeding out non-performers.

Second, service academy graduates receive a great deal of leadership experience. Military command develops and reinforces many good habits (as well as a few bad ones). But academy graduates perform no better in military command than those commissioned through ROTC or the regular route of Officer Training School (OTS). In addition, ROTC veterans actually tend to be more successful in civilian leadership positions than academy graduates.

Service academy graduates have a number of strengths. Sterling correctly focuses on character: honesty, integrity, and responsibility. But again, the best evidence shows academy graduates score no higher on these measures than their ROTC or OTS counterparts.

On the other hand, academy graduates do have two relative weaknesses. First, they are inept at matching decision style to circumstances. They know only one style of decision making, the hierarchical, and inappropriately rely on it twice as often as any other group of leaders. Second, academy graduates are even more isolated from mainstream social and political norms than their ROTC or OTS counterparts, who themselves are significantly more Republican and conservative than civilians holding comparable leadership positions. It is likely that these qualities are not due to selection bias but are fostered by the service academies.

Service academies long ago outlived their usefulness. They reflect the defunct class and organizational biases of an industrial age. Better models for selecting and training of our military (and business) leaders would be the practices of today's Israelis or the Germans during the Weimar Republic.

Fred Thompson
Willamette University School of Management

Robert Sterling spoke the truth in his wonderful piece. As a vice president at two separate companies, both led by graduates of West Point, I have observed firsthand the virtues instilled by the academies.

Michael E. Connor
Dallas, Texas

One hiring manager mentioned in Robert Sterling's article "couldn't comprehend" why a talented person would spend "four or five years flying around in a jet" for the military. The short answer: So the hiring manager might sleep soundly in his bed and take his liberty for granted.

G.W. Schulz
San Antonio, Texas

Based on a couple of examples —notably Philadelphia's continued population losses and its bizarre attempts to imitate the suburbs—Fred Siegel writes that suburban sprawl is the wave of the future ("America's Startling New Urban Makeup," July/August). But for every example Siegel cites there is a counterexample.

While some of America's older "vertical cities" continue to lose population to their suburbs, others have rebounded. Of the five large American cities with over 10,000 persons per square mile, three (New York, Chicago, and San Francisco) all gained population from 1990-98. And while Philadelphia, according to Siegel, seeks to turn its deserted areas into auto-oriented imitation suburbs, other cities and their suburbs are revitalizing their urban neighborhoods; for instance, Denver's LoDo, Atlanta's Fairlie-Poplar and East Atlanta. Even a few suburbs are trying to imitate the walkable urban neighborhoods of the past—Kentlands in suburban Washington, for example.

Michael Lewyn
John Marshall Law School

Your blasts against Hillary Rodham Clinton (July/August) say a lot more about you and your authors' obsessions than they do about the First Lady.

Mrs. Clinton is neither a saint nor the amoral hardened criminal portrayed by your fire-breathers. I hope she wins her race just to spite you and keep you obsessed for at least another six years. Perhaps after that you can all get a life.

Charles S. Clark
Arlington, Virginia

CORRECTION: In "What Are America's Best Business Schools?" (July/August), General Alexander Haig's alma mater is misidentified. He is a graduate of West Point.

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send to "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax to (202) 862-5867. Or e-mail TheAmericanEnterprise@compuserve.com. Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schwadron

Jed Vier

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Coming in August to PBS

How will Nader's Raiders and the Buchanan Brigades affect the outcome of the 2000 Presidential race?

A Third Choice, a one-hour special from **Think Tank with Ben Wattenberg**, sets the stage for the 2000 election by examining America's fascinating national experience with third parties and independent candidates.

A Third Choice will air on PBS after the Democratic, Republican, Green, and Reform conventions. Originally produced in 1996, **A Third Choice** has been updated to include segments on Ralph Nader, Pat Buchanan, Jesse Ventura, and Ross Perot.

Third party candidates have played an enormous role in American elections by giving voice to new concerns, putting new issues on the agenda, and reshaping existing coalitions. Even when they fail to get elected, they often drive the national agenda when their issues are co-opted by the major parties.

Moderated by Ben Wattenberg, **A Third Choice** puts this year's Nader and Buchanan candidacies in the historical context of efforts by Theodore Roosevelt, Robert LaFollete, Eugene Debs, Henry Wallace, Strom Thurmond, George Wallace, John Anderson and Ross Perot. More than 200 years of America's third party movements are brought to life with a rich collection of campaign memorabilia, rare archival footage, artwork, political cartoons and campaign songs.

Could a third party again become an important force in the near future?

"A Third Choice is an absolutely superb documentary — public television at its best."

Steven Rosenstone
Professor of Political Science, Univ. of Michigan

Washington	WETA/26	Wednesday, August 30, 10:30 P.M.
New York	WNET/13	Sunday, August 20, 6:30 P.M.
Philadelphia	WHYY/12	Friday, August 18, 10:00 P.M.

Check local listings for show times in your area

A THIRD CHOICE

WITH BEN WATTENBERG

Support for A Third Choice is provided by the Smith Richardson Foundation, the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, the Bernard and Irene Schwartz Foundation, PBS, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

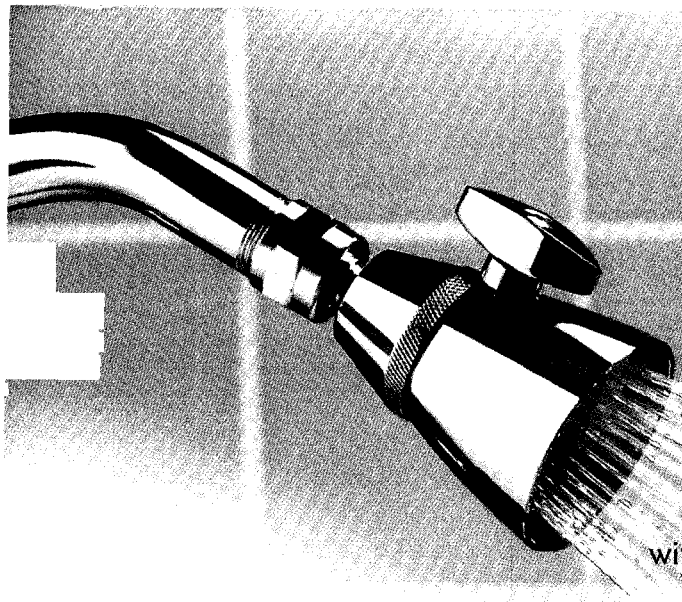
Pfizer

PBS

Think TANK WITH BEN WATTENBERG

The PBS program on ideas
www.pbs.org/ThinkTank

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

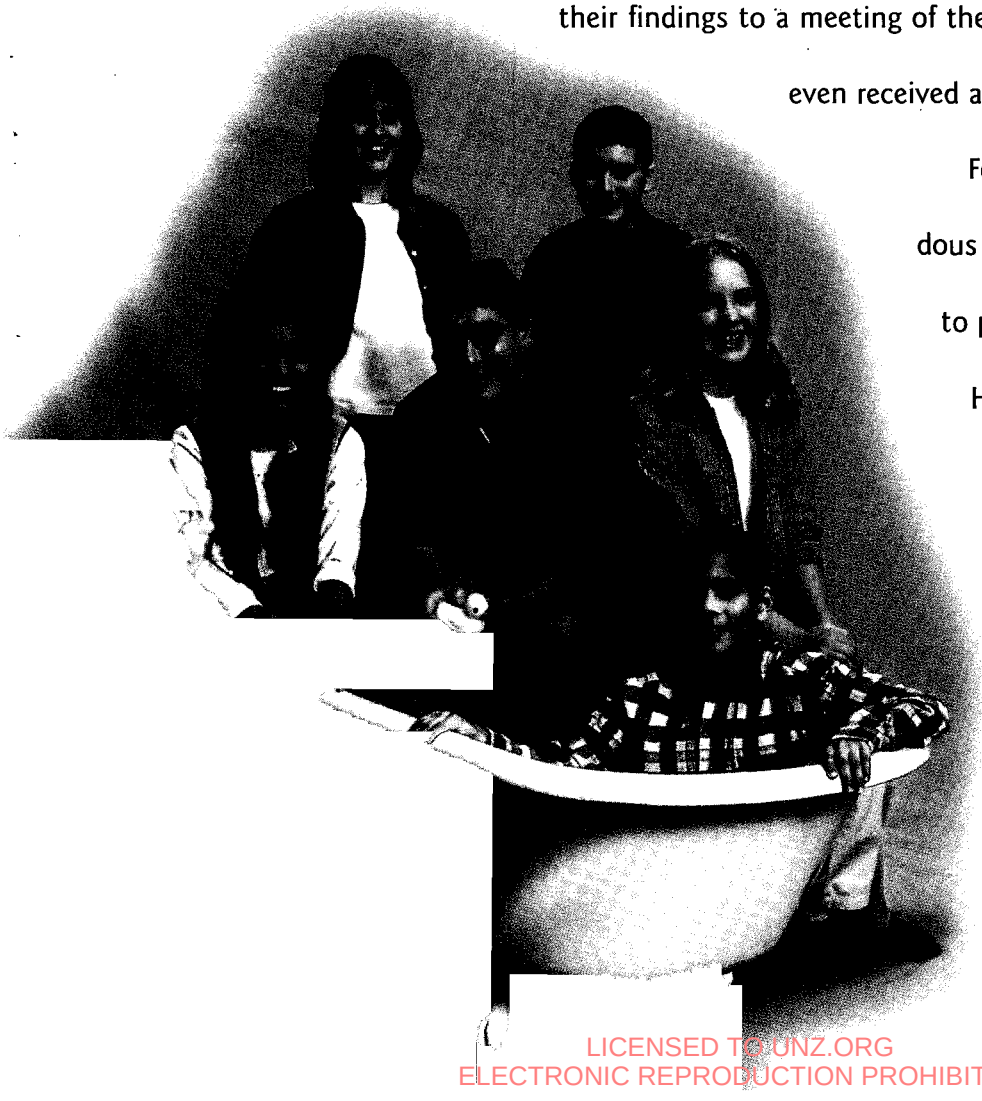


Here's an idea they came up with in the shower.

Hector Ibarra's seventh grade science class came up with a great way to conserve water. By retrofitting the shower heads, faucets and toilets in their homes with water-saving devices, they saved their community over 400,000 gallons of water.

As part of a separate project entitled "The Hidden Cost of Lighting," they encouraged 184 households to switch from incandescent to fluorescent lighting, saving over $1,000 worth of electricity.

So impressive were these results that Mr. Ibarra and two students were invited to present their findings to a meeting of the World Energy Council in Tokyo. They even received an accolade from President Clinton.



For exerting, and conserving, a tremendous amount of energy, State Farm is pleased to present the Good Neighbor Award® to Hector Ibarra, and to donate $5,000 to West Branch Middle School of West Branch, Iowa.

STATE FARM INSURANCE

Good Neighbor Award®

STATE FARM INSURANCE COMPANIES
Home Offices: Bloomington, Illinois

statefarm.com

The Good Neighbor Award was developed in cooperation with the National Science Teachers Association.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED